Being
Mental Health Consumers

Annual Report

2026

Acknowledgments

BEING – Mental Health Consumers acknowledges Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn, and work. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging. We acknowledge that this land was never ceded and was and always will be Aboriginal land.

BEING – Mental Health Consumers acknowledges all people living with mental health issues and emotional distress, for their strength and courage to challenge and face each day. You are the driving force of the work we do at BEING – Mental Health Consumers. Your voice matters and is greatly valued.

Our Patron

Her Excellency the Honourable
Margaret Beazley AC KC,
Governor of New South Wales

Rights Bring Accountability
We Stand for Human Rights in Mental Health
Human Rights Protect Mental Health
Rights for Consumers, Support for Carers.
Protecting Rights. Protecting Mental Health.

2026 Year in Review

MEMBERSHIP

58% Annual increase in membership

(1 July 2025 vs 30 June 2026)

CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

49 Advisory committee members *(as at 30 June 2025)*

222 BEING Connected users

233 Library Contributions

373 BEING Connected threads

17 BEING Connected Blog Posts

40 Blog posts

> *"BEING Connected is more than just a space, it's a community where people with lived experience of mental health challenges can share, support and shape the future of mental health care. Together, we're not just talking - we're creating the change that truly matters."*
>
> *BEING Connected Member*

POLICY & ADVOCACY

6 Submissions

4 New position statement

43 Number of steering and advisory committees for which we provided representational advocacy

26 NSW Health consultations attended (as consumer lived experience.)

MEDIA

279 Total media mentions

13 Media releases

12 Campaigns

7 Joint National Mental Health Consumer Alliance media statements

MAD MONDAY MEMO (Newsletter)

1,960 Subscribers (+7.8%)*

130,037 individual emails (+33%)

52 Issues

45% Open rate

SOCIAL MEDIA

1,169 Total number of posts (+134%)

+7.4% Overall engagement

10,169 Total followers (+63%)

4,316 (+12.3%)

642 (+23.9%)

2,267 (+0.1%)

2,944 (+32%)

NOTE: Percentages expressed as FY 26 vs FY25. Values expressed for the FY26 or as at June 30 2026.

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1. CEO Report

Giancarlo de Vera
CEO

The opportunity to lead BEING remains an extraordinary privilege. As Australia's second-oldest mental health consumer peak body, 100% run and governed by people with lived experience, every member of BEING should be proud of what we have built together this year. After record membership growth of 149% the year prior, our membership has grown by a further 58% in 2025–26. Every contribution, of every member, however large or small, makes our consumer movement in NSW stronger.

I want to take a moment to celebrate our movement's foundations. BEING's inaugural CEO and foundation member, Janet Meagher AO, was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in this year's King's Birthday Honours, recognised for her lived experience leadership and distinguished service to championing a human rights-based mental health system. At BEING, we are enormously proud. It is entirely fitting that Janet's lifelong commitment was honoured in a year when BEING continued its leading role in rights-based reform.

As a key member of the Human Rights Act for NSW Steering Committee, BEING led the sector push for a much-needed NSW parliamentary inquiry into the case for a Human Rights Act for NSW. We are that much closer to achieving this reform, and to support the continued push, this year we were also proud to launch Protecting Rights, Protecting Mental Health with Wayahead and Mental Health Carers NSW in the NSW Parliament, an advocacy toolkit to support mental health consumers and our allies to self-advocate for human rights law reform.

The rights to autonomy and dignity sit at the heart of everything we do. This year, BEING drove renewed momentum for supported decision-making in NSW, working with legislators, statutory office holders like the NSW Public Guardian, and safeguarding agencies, to identify the reforms needed so that mental health consumers direct our own lives and care. This work is key if we are to stop and replace the involuntary, coercive treatment that mental health consumers experience now, because that's not care. It is a rights violation, and we remain determined to end it.

That urgency becomes most acute when a consumer's life is on the line. For years, BEING members and our supporters have pushed for alternative first responders to mental health crises, after so many consumers have died. This year, BEING led a coalition of mental health, community and justice reform organisations in releasing Having a Mental Health Crisis is not a Crime, a joint statement that brought sustained attention and pressure to decision-makers and finally produced a health-led response that our community has wanted for so long. Without the right to life, every other human rights reform is in vain. Our members should be very proud of the change we have brought about.

However, that advocacy is only sustainable if the organisation behind it is strong. The lived experience leadership BEING has demonstrated this year saw the NSW Government invest $4.3 million into mental health peak body advocacy. This is the single largest increase in mental health peak body advocacy funding in more than a quarter century, and it expands our capacity to represent consumers across the state.

To reach more of those mental health consumers, this year we also launched our "*We're All Ears!*" Regional Roadshow, kicking off in Moree, to connect with rural and remote communities. By the time the roadshow concludes, we will have reached communities across 62% of the state.

At the same time, we have done the deeper work with members of developing a Theory of Change, a strategic framework that maps the direct line from our activities that BEING members are part of, to the long-term, consumer-informed reform we exist to achieve. Alongside it, a new impact measurement framework was developed, and will allow us to track and demonstrate that we are delivering on it — building the kind of organisational memory and accountability that carries our movement's purpose across generations, not just annual reports.

This work, turned inward, is just as vital as the advocacy we take outward. For an organisation more than 30 years old, in a year when our inaugural CEO and foundation member was honoured for a decades-long commitment to the cause that built us, this is how we honour the luminaries of our movement who came before and ensure the work endures beyond any of us.

That work endures because of the people who carry it. To the BEING team, Board, and every member: thank you for the part you have each played in what we have achieved together. As an organisation by and for mental health consumers, we have so much to be proud of.

Giancarlo de Vera

Tim Heffernan
Chair

2. Chair Report

BEING – Mental Health Consumers' principal purpose is "*to pursue the charitable purpose of promoting the prevention, control and improvement of mental health issues … in people in Australia through policy advocacy and consultation, public engagement, provision of public information, program implementation and targeted initiatives*" (Constitution 6.1).

Rather than repeat all the achievements presented in the CEO report, I want to reflect on how well we have fulfilled our principal purpose. As a long-standing BEING member and director, I have never seen us more active or visible in advocacy, strategic reform, consultation and engagement. This reflects Giancarlo's leadership, the skill of our operational team: Shannon Lowrie, Julian Clarkson, Peter Schmiedgen, Kylie Smith and Lawrence Muskitta, and the dedication of our lived experience Board.

I am proudest of our growing membership and the regional roadshow. Having grown up in rural and regional NSW, I know the importance of the city coming to the country, not the reverse. This was meaningful, heartfelt work.

Most importantly, I thank all BEING members for your voice, trust and commitment to improving the lives of mental health consumers in NSW. As disability advocate Helen Keller said, "*Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much*."

I have been reflecting on good governance and teamwork. The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) defines good governance as the everyday procedures, systems and processes that support leadership, accountability, transparency, compliance, trust, integrity, efficiency, consistency, sound resource use, improvement, member engagement and accurate financial reporting.

Good governance helps an organisation serve its members while reducing the risks of non-compliance, misconduct and misuse of members' money.

This is a significant responsibility for BEING's voluntary, unremunerated Board. I am proud to serve with a team committed to good governance through sound policies, practices and procedures. My sincere thanks to Russell Barratt, Catherine Garner, Richard Hendrie, Heidi Keevers, Rachael Laidler, Stephen Smith, Binoe Verghese and William Woods for their consistent strategic focus on our members. Special thanks to Deputy Chair Heidi, BARC Chair Russell, Membership and

Partnerships Committee Chair Rachael, and our outstanding company secretary, Sue Walker.

My thanks to Heidi and Will, who leave the Board this year. Your valued contributions have mattered to everyone at BEING, and we wish you well in your next chapters.

Our well-established BARC strengthens financial responsibility, compliance, trust and integrity. It is ably led by Russell and benefits from the expertise of non-Board member Mark Laidler, alongside Board members Binoe, Rachael, me and Sue. Thank you all.

BEING has contributed significantly to the wellbeing of mental health consumers in NSW, but we remain committed to improvement and growth. With support from the Social Impact Hub, staff and the Board are developing a *Theory of Change* and *Impact Measurement Framework*. In 2025–26, we also sought broader funding through targeted grants and philanthropy.

As NSW's peak body for mental health consumers, we draw strength from partnerships—particularly with other state peak consumer organisations through the National Mental Health Consumer Alliance, and with Wayahead and Mental Health Carers NSW.

I thank our primary funder, the NSW Government, and Mental Health Minister, the Hon. Rose Jackson MLC for their ongoing support and recognition of lived experience. We welcome the recent $4.3 million investment in mental health peak body advocacy. The commitment to health-led responses to mental health crises shows the government is listening to and investing in our collective voice.

Thank you also to our friends in the NSW Parliament, in particular Dr Amanda Cohn from NSW Greens. the Shadow Minister for Health, Regional Health and Mental Health, the Hon. Sarah Mitchell MLC, and so many others, for working with BEING in the Parliament to secure transparency in the recently released Review and Planning for Mental Health Services (gaps analysis) report, and in advancing human rights law reform in NSW.

Finally, thank you to SDJA Audit Specialists for completing the 2025–26 audit, their inaugural audit with BEING, and to Incorp Advisory for providing accounting services.

Tim Heffernan

3. Membership and Consumer Engagement

A. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

In 2025–26, BEING's membership grew by 58%. This growth reflects the growing strength, visibility and reach of our community, and the increasing recognition of the importance of lived experience in shaping mental health systems and supports.

Our growing membership has been strengthened through BEING's advocacy and sector engagement, increased visibility across media and communities, and the powerful organic reach created when members share their experiences and connect with others.

Every new member brings a unique perspective of lived and living experience, strengthening the diversity of voices BEING represents and amplifying our collective advocacy for mental health consumers across NSW and nationally.

As we look ahead, BEING is committed to building on this momentum while deepening member engagement, ensuring our growing community is not only represented, but empowered to influence and shape the future of mental health systems and supports.

B. 2025-26 ADVISORY COMMITTEES

In 2025/26, 40 dedicated members contributed their lived experience, expertise and perspectives across BEING's four advisory committees:

- Youth
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM)
- Rural and Remote
- LGBTQIA+ - established in 2025/26

Our advisory committees play a vital role in shaping BEING's advocacy, projects and strategic direction, ensuring the diverse experiences and voices of mental health consumers are heard, valued and represented.

The introduction of our LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee this year marked an important expansion of BEING's commitment to inclusive, community-led advocacy and ensuring our work reflects the voices of communities who experience unique barriers within mental health systems.

Over the year, our advisory committee members provided meaningful insight, collaboration and lived-experience leadership, helping to influence mental health reform and service development across NSW.

C. BEING CONNECTED

BEING Connected continues to grow as a powerful consumer-led and consumer-owned space for connection, peer support and shared experience. In 2025/26, more than one-third of BEING members were active on the platform, demonstrating a strong appetite for community-led connection and conversation.

Exclusively available to BEING members with lived or living experience of mental health challenges, BEING Connected provides a safe and supportive space to ask questions, share experiences, seek advice and connect with others. Members can also access a growing library of resources, events and personal stories through blogs.

This year, members contributed:

- 373 discussion threads
- 233 library entries
- 17 personal blogs

These contributions represent more than activity on a platform - they reflect genuine peer-to-peer connection, knowledge sharing and collaboration across NSW, including urban, regional, rural and remote communities.

What makes BEING Connected unique is that it is a space shaped by and for people with lived experience. There is no clinical framing or hierarchy; members lead the conversations, share what matters to them and draw on the knowledge and understanding that comes from lived experience.

As BEING Connected continues to evolve, so does its role in strengthening our community and informing BEING's advocacy. It provides an important space for members to connect, have their voices heard and contribute to meaningful change in mental health systems and supports.

BEING Connected is our community, shaped by our members, for our members.

D. GOVERNMENT CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

In 2025/26, BEING supported 93 consumers to actively contribute their voices, expertise and lived experience across a broad range of consultations, working groups, advisory committees and co-design opportunities. These engagements ensured that mental health services, policies and systems were informed by the people who use them and are most affected by them.

Our consumer engagement extended across mental health, suicide prevention, peer work, youth, perinatal mental health, eating disorders, rehabilitation, AOD, tobacco, cancer care and mental health emergency responses, as well as a range of local and state-wide reform initiatives.

Key engagements include, but are not limited to:

- Alternative First Responders Coalition
- Central Eastern Sydney Child Mental Health Collaborative
- Central Eastern Sydney Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Implementation Committee
- CLS Mental Health Evaluation Committee
- Community of Practice Meeting for Children and Young People
- Discharge Planning and Transfer of Care Policy Directive – Expert Reference Group
- Family Focused Recovery Implementation Committee
- Mental Health Rehabilitation Capability Building Working Group
- NSW Ambulance Consumer Consultation: Restrictive Practice
- NSW Health Eating Disorders Service Plan Consultation
- NSW Mental Health Rehabilitation Monitoring and Evaluation Group
- NSW Health Policy Advisory Group – Policy Directive 'Care of People Who May Be Suicidal'
- NSW Health Pathways to Community Living Network Committee
- St Vincent's Urban Health Hub Project
- Tackling Tobacco Mental Health Steering Committee
- University of Sydney Discharge Planning and Transfer of Care Consultation
- Nous Quitline Review – consultation with people experiencing AOD challenges and mental health conditions
- Perinatal Peer Workforce Advisory Consultation
- Cancer Council Co-Design Reference Group
- NSW Health Mental Health Inpatient Rehabilitation Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group
- Minister Rose Jackson Youth Lived Experience Mental Health Roundtable
- Bondi Mental Health and Wellbeing Pop-Up Evaluation Consultation

Through these opportunities, BEING continued to create meaningful pathways for lived experience to influence decision-making at local, state and national levels. The breadth of these engagements demonstrates the value of consumer voices in identifying gaps, challenging existing approaches, and contributing to services and systems that are more responsive, inclusive, and grounded in real-world experience.

4. National Mental Health Consumer Alliance

A. YEAR IN REVIEW

BEING is a foundational member of the national peak body for mental health consumers, the National Mental Health Consumer Alliance. The Alliance unites Australia's strongest voices for mental health justice and operates as a federation of state and territory consumer peak bodies like BEING. Each peak body has deep roots in community, fierce integrity and grassroots insights.

Together, the Alliance has more than 135 years of collective lived experience leadership. Alongside the Indigenous Australian Lived Experience Centre, who joined our Alliance last year, we have been a powerful national voice representing the voice of mental health consumers.

This year, following the release of the Alliance's very first strategic plan, Reimagining Mental Health 2025-2030 last year, the work of the Alliance and BEING's involvement in it has centred on the Alliance's vision for mental health consumers to determine our wants and needs.

BEING members spent the year developing and working on a project of national importance through our Consumer Advisory Group and Older Persons Mental Health Group. You can read more about what these groups did this year in this section.

B. CONSUMER ADVISORY GROUP AND OLDER PERSONS MENTAL HEALTH GROUP

In 2025/26, BEING continued to strengthen the voice of people with lived experience at a national level through the work of our Consumer Advisory Group (CAG) and the introduction of our Older Persons Mental Health Group (OPMHG).

The CAG has played an important role in shaping the work of the National Mental Health Consumer Alliance (NMHCA) and has focused this year on developing a national project examining the Medicare Mental Health Care Plan - asking a fundamental question: is it fit for purpose, and does it reflect what consumers need?

Through this work, the CAG has sought to identify and address the significant gaps consumers experience within the current Mental Health Care Plan, ensuring that any future approach is informed by the people it is intended to support. Importantly, the CAG has engaged with more than 300 consumers across Australia, bringing together diverse lived experiences and perspectives to help shape this nationally significant work.

The CAG's project will be finalised in 2026/27, with the findings and recommendations providing an important consumer-led contribution to national conversations about accessible, effective and meaningful mental health support.

C. OLDER PERSONS MENTAL HEALTH GROUP

2025/26 also saw the introduction of BEING's Older Persons Mental Health Group, bringing together five incredible members committed to ensuring older people are not left behind in conversations about their own mental health, care and wellbeing.

The group has begun developing a mental health and wellbeing guide for older people, grounded in lived experience and designed to ensure older people are at the heart of the care and support they receive. This work recognises the importance of listening to older people about what matters to them, what they need, and how mental health services can better respond to their experiences.

Together, the CAG and OPMHG demonstrate the power of lived experience leadership in shaping conversations of national significance. Their contributions ensure that the perspectives of consumers - including those whose voices can too often be overlooked — are brought into the conversations, decisions and reforms that affect their lives.

We sincerely thank every member of the CAG and OPMHG for their time, commitment, expertise and generosity in sharing their lived experience. Their contributions are helping to ensure that lived experience remains at the centre of mental health reform - locally, across NSW and nationally.

“We’re All Ears” Regional Roadshow

> *“I’m more than what’s written on my file.”*

As the financial year came to a close, BEING’s “We’re All Ears!” Regional Roadshow was in full swing. A standalone report will be published covering the entire tour but we recognise it here as a significant additional undertaking in FY26.

The We’re All Ears Regional Roadshow was built around a simple idea: people living in rural and regional areas face additional challenges navigating the mental healthcare system. To understand what is happening for them, we needed to go to them, to sit in their communities, spend time in the services they use, listen to what is working, hear what is not, and create space for conversations that may not otherwise reach decision-making tables.

And so, CEO Giancarlo and Lived Experience Engagement Manager Kylie travelled.

At a glance

In all, we met with 113 organisations and engaged with over 350 individual consumers. But the numbers only tell a small part of the story.

In Moree (4 May), we heard about workforce shortages, difficulties accessing psychiatrists and psychologists, transport barriers and people being transferred enormous distances for care. We also saw the strength of First Nations-led approaches working with young mob in schools to build skills, confidence and a belief in their future.

In Port Macquarie and Kempsey (25-27 May), we heard about the importance of community connection, volunteering and belonging. We visited Endeavour Clubhouse, saw the impact of Kempsey’s Hospital in the Home model and were deeply honoured to join the Kempsey Sorry Day Commemoration to listen, learn and remember alongside the Dungutti community.

In Dubbo, Narromine and Tamworth (1-5 June), we visited Safe Havens and saw, innovative local responses. At Narromine High School, we saw what becomes possible when support is brought to young people where they are, in their school and community.

In Coffs Harbour (16-18 June), consumers trusted us with deeply personal experiences of hospital care, discharge, recovery and navigating fragmented systems and showed us what good care can feel like when built on kindness, respect, and genuine understanding.

We're All Ears

> *I want to be treated like a whole person, not a label.*

Different communities. Many of the same messages.

Despite travelling across very different parts of NSW, remarkably consistent themes followed us.

People told us about **long waitlists, workforce shortages, housing insecurity and homelessness, transport barriers, limited access to GPs and specialists, fragmented services, gaps in discharge planning, limited alternatives to emergency departments and inequitable access created simply by where someone lives.**

We heard repeatedly about the need to stop separating mental health from the other realities of people's lives - including housing, AOD, disability, physical health, family, culture, financial security and involvement with the justice system.

And we heard, again and again, that peer workers and lived experience leadership matter, holding space for those in distress, helping them navigate a broken system, and maintaining connection in a way that clinical support alone cannot.

> *Recovery starts with being included in conversations about your own treatment.*

Finding Hope

The Roadshow was not simply a catalogue of what is wrong with the mental health system. Everywhere we travelled, we found people creating solutions: small community organisations stretching limited resources because they refuse to let people fall through the gaps; communities creating spaces for connection and belonging; and services genuinely co-designing with consumers.

This is what lived experience can do when it is valued.

Carrying these voices forward

The real measure of the Roadshow is the trust people placed in us. What we heard will inform and shape our advocacy work with government and decision-makers.

Thank you to every consumer, member, peer worker, service, organisation and community that opened their doors and their hearts to us.

We heard you, and we will continue to carry your voices with us.

> *Recovery doesn't stop at discharge.*

5. Policy and Advocacy

A. YEAR IN REVIEW

A health-led response to mental health crises

This year, BEING continued to lead the call to end police-led responses to people experiencing a mental health crisis, and to replace them with a health-led response. In July 2025, following further violent police responses to people in mental health crisis, BEING released a series of media releases and launched a campaign inviting members to write to their local MP about fast-tracking alternatives to police as first responders. Alongside Mental Health Carers NSW, we also wrote to the Minister for Police and Counter-Terrorism. We called for a public apology, transparent reporting of deaths caused by police lethal force, and better mental health training for police.

Over the following months, BEING met with the Police Minister's office and the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission to bring consumer perspectives to their work. Our expert advice led to changes to the Commission's public survey on police interactions with mental health consumers. BEING also brought the consumer voice to NSW Health's consultation on a new model for responding to mental health emergencies, running a dedicated consumer focus group.

In June 2026, ABC Four Corners' 'Brutal Force' episode showed the confronting treatment of Jodi Knott by NSW Police. BEING responded with a joint media release with the National Mental Health Consumer Alliance, a community screening, and an open letter from the Knott family. On NSW Budget night, BEING coordinated the joint statement Having a Mental Health Crisis Is Not a Crime, endorsed by more than 30 mental health, legal, disability, housing and social service organisations. It set out a four-point reform plan, including a health-led emergency response as the default. The same evening, BEING held a parliamentary event with cross-party attendance. We also held a candlelight vigil at NSW Parliament House, alongside families of people killed during police responses to a mental health crisis.

This sustained advocacy delivered results. Shortly after the end of the financial year, the NSW Government announced more than $270 million over ten years for a health-led response to mental health emergencies. The investment includes a statewide Virtual Mental Health Hub and eight Mental Health Acute Assessment Teams. BEING welcomed the announcement, and we will keep working to ensure people with lived experience help shape how the model is rolled out.

The inquiry into a Human Rights Act for NSW

Human rights-based care is a key priority across all of BEING's work. It was a milestone year in the campaign for a Human Rights Act for NSW. In October 2025, BEING joined more than 100 organisations in an open statement calling for a parliamentary inquiry into a Human Rights Act, as the Member for Newtown introduced the Human Rights Bill 2025 into the NSW Parliament.

In February 2026, with Wayahead, Mental Health Carers NSW and the Human Rights Act for NSW Alliance, BEING co-hosted a sold-out event at NSW Parliament House. Speakers included the Hon. Kevin Bell AO KC, Rosemary Kayess, the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Commissioner, the Minister for Mental Health and members from across the Parliament. At the event, we launched *Protecting Rights, Protecting Mental Health*, an advocacy toolkit developed by BEING, to help mental health consumers speak up for their rights. We then helped lead a statewide Day of Action encouraging people to call their local MPs.

In March 2026, the NSW Parliament unanimously referred the Human Rights Bill 2025 to the Community Services Committee for inquiry. With one in two mental health consumers feeling their human rights are respected, and one in three having experienced cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment, BEING then encouraged members to make their own submissions to the inquiry. We also used our "We're All Ears!" regional roadshow to capture what regional consumers want from a Human Rights Act, as we developed BEING's submission to the inquiry which we submitted in July 2026.

Negotiating the next National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement

The Productivity Commission's Final Report into its review of the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement found that the current Agreement had achieved little systemic change. It recommended that the next Agreement be co-designed with people with lived experience. BEING was at the forefront of turning this recommendation into action, advocating strongly for mental health consumers to lead the co-design of psychosocial supports outside the NDIS.

BEING worked closely with the Minister for Mental Health, who championed the role of lived experience at national Health and Mental Health Ministers' meetings. BEING played a leading role in briefing the Minister alongside our partners in the NSW Mental Health Alliance, to adequately brief the NSW Government in the ongoing negotiations around the next National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement.

With negotiations continuing over the national agreement, BEING has taken a leading coordination role with our sister state and territory consumer peak bodies, to develop a national advocacy campaign.

Review of the Discharge Planning and Transfer of Care Policy Directive

Leaving hospital or moving between mental health services is one of the most vulnerable times for mental health consumers. Too often, consumers are discharged without the planning, follow-up and community supports they need to stay well. This year, BEING played a central role in supporting NSW Health's review of the Discharge Planning and Transfer of Care Policy Directive.

We worked with the University of Sydney in a three-phase co-design process with mental health consumers across the state, with the aim of designing recommendations to improve the policy directive that centre the voices of consumers.

During this year, we completed Phase 1 of the co-design process, after BEING provided expert advice on consultation design and consumer engagement to the NSW Health team leading the review. This phase saw consumers with recent experience with discharge and transfer of care in emergency departments, in-patient units and community mental health services share their experiences through a survey and one-on-one conversations with BEING.

BEING thanks every consumer who shared their experience and expertise, as well as our partners at the University of Sydney and the NSW Health Social Policy Branch. We look forward to seeing consumer-led recommendations reflected in the revised Policy Directive.

A historic win for mental health advocacy funding

For too long, NSW has invested the least per capita of any state or territory in its mental health consumer peak body, at just $0.10 per person. In our pre-budget submission in December 2025, BEING made the case for a proportional increase in our core funding. We argued that the NSW Government could not meet expectations to co-design national reforms with mental health consumers without an adequately resourced consumer voice.

In June 2026, the NSW Government announced a $4.3 million investment in mental health advocacy, the largest increase in mental health advocacy funding in 25 years. This investment provides the three NSW mental health peak bodies, BEING, Mental Health Carers NSW and the Mental Health Coordinating Council, an additional $333,000 per year over four years. BEING thanks the Minister for Mental Health, the Hon. Rose Jackson MLC, the Minister for Health, the Hon. Ryan Park MP, and the Premier, the Hon. Chris Minns MP, for recognising the value of the lived experience voice.

The investment will strengthen BEING's ability to provide systemic advice and advocacy during one of the most significant periods of mental health reform in a generation. At the same time, BEING was clear that the NSW Budget contained very little new investment in mental health services. We will keep advocating for services that meet the level of unmet need in NSW.

International Advocacy

After a big international advocacy focus last year, BEING's international advocacy took a backseat as we focused on deepening our networks across the state with our "*We're All Ears!*" Regional Roadshow. International cooperation is the key focus of Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, enabling the emergence of best practice in implementing human rights. This year we continued to deepen our relationships across the Asia-Pacific region, most notably with the Republic of Korea.

We were honoured to welcome Professor Seonmee Hong from Hanshin University, who works on intergovernmental planning for mental health services and psychosocial supports in the Republic of Korea. Professor Hong led a ten-person delegation to Sydney, and we shared experiences about congregate and institutional settings for people with psychosocial disability, and the value of housing-first solutions, independent living, and community participation.

We reciprocated the goodwill, building on connections first made at the 18th session of the Conference of State Parties (COSP) to the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in 2025, which our CEO attended. There, we met with the President and Manager of International Relations of Disabled People's International Korea (DPI-Korea). Our subsequent meeting in Seoul focused on the Korean experience of governmental commissioning of psychosocial supports and a comparison of the deinstitutionalisation process in our two countries.

B. NSW SUBMISSIONS

Workers' Compensation – July 2025

In July 2025, BEING made a submission to the NSW Parliament's Public Accountability and Works Committee inquiry into the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. The proposed reforms would have significantly restricted access to workers' compensation for people who experienced psychological injuries at work. BEING strongly opposed the changes.

We argued that they would leave workers with psychosocial injuries without the rehabilitation and return-to-work support they were entitled to under Articles 26 and 27 of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD). We also highlighted that the reforms risked shifting costs onto an already under-resourced mental health system, further entrenching underinvestment. They would also have disproportionately affected workers in the mental health and human services sectors, where the risk of psychosocial injury was high.

We called on the NSW Government to put the voices and human rights of mental health consumers at the centre of any reform.

Anti-Discrimination Act Review – August 2025

As part of the NSW Law Reform Commission's review of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*, BEING was pleased to make a submission. We argued that the Act's outdated, formal approach to equality needed to shift towards substantive equality, so that mental health consumers experienced equal outcomes and not simply equal treatment.

We called for psychosocial disability to be explicitly recognised as a protected attribute, and for civil vilification protections to be extended to disability and psychosocial disability.

We also advocated for a positive duty on public and private bodies to provide reasonable adjustments and supported decision-making, in line with Article 12 of the CRPD. Mental health consumers often experience discrimination across several attributes at once, so we also recommended that complaints be allowed on multiple, intersecting grounds, and that the subjective comparator test be removed.

NSW Strategy for Mental Health and Wellbeing – September 2025

The NSW Mental Health Commission consulted on its new ten-year Strategy for Mental Health and Wellbeing and BEING made a submission with 28 recommendations. We urged the Commission to make de-segregation a clear and ongoing focus of the strategy.

We argued that the routine use of substitute decision-making, and the underfunding of community-based and preventative supports, continued to keep mental health consumers in institutional settings. Grounded in Article 12 of the CRPD, we called for a whole-of-government approach to supported decision-making, including supported decision-making services in all NSW Health inpatient settings. We also called for the prohibition of seclusion and restraint in line with Disability Royal Commission Recommendation 6.36, a ban on all non-consensual treatments, and a review of the *NSW Mental Health Act 2007*.

We also recommended a transition to a health-led response to mental health crises, an independent mental health complaints body, and the expansion of the Safe Haven network to open 24/7 across more of NSW. We called for the NSW Attorney-General to nominate a National Preventive Mechanism, so that NSW met its obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture.

Throughout, we called for lived experience to be embedded in the strategy's governance and in government decision-making, including mental health consumers leading the co-design of psychosocial supports outside the NDIS.

Pre-Budget Submission – December 2025

Ahead of the NSW Government's final budget before the 2027 state election, BEING made a pre-budget submission to NSW Treasury requesting a proportional increase in our core funding. We highlighted that NSW invested the least per capita in its mental health consumer peak body of any jurisdiction, at just $0.10 per person.

We argued that this chronic underinvestment limited the systemic advice available to the NSW Government, at a time of significant reform. That reform included negotiations on the next National Health Reform Agreement and the next National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement, and the development of NDIS Foundational Supports.

With the Productivity Commission recommending that the next Agreement be co-designed with people with lived experience, and the Australian Government increasing its investment in the Alliance, we asked the NSW Government to at least match that investment on a per capita basis. That would ensure NSW could genuinely partner with mental health consumers in these reforms.

BEING was pleased to see the 2026–27 NSW Budget include a $4.3 million investment in mental health advocacy, which recognised the importance of adequately funding the voice of mental health consumers in systemic reform.

Supported Decision-Making – March 2026

The NSW Parliament's Committee on Ageing and Disability held an inquiry into supported decision-making for adults with disability and older people in NSW to which BEING made a submission with 17 recommendations.

We highlighted that NSW laws, including guardianship laws and the Mental Health Act 2007, routinely denied mental health consumers their legal capacity. We noted that NSW had the second-highest rate of involuntary hospitalisation in Australia, and that one in three NSW mental health consumers agreed to treatment only to avoid forced admission.

In line with Article 12 of the CRPD, we called for supported decision-making to be the primary approach in all settings, with substitute decision-making used only as a genuine last resort. We called for Australia's interpretative declaration on Article 12 to be withdrawn, as recommended by the Disability Royal Commission (Recommendation 6.20), and for a review of the Mental Health Act 2007. We also sought a response from the NSW Government to the NSW Law Reform Commission's 2018 guardianship report, formal recognition of the essential role of peer workers, and a public education campaign to address attitudinal barriers.

Working with the NSW Ageing and Disability Commission, we also proposed three formal safeguarding mechanisms for informal decision-making settings. BEING engaged extensively with our membership in developing the submission, and their voices were reflected throughout. As one member told us, "My opinion became a symptom." BEING's CEO also gave evidence at the inquiry's public hearing in May 2026.

C. NATIONAL SUBMISSIONS

Productivity Commission – August 2025

The Productivity Commission's review of the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement was a critical opportunity to shape the next decade of mental health reform. BEING made a submission responding to the Commission's Interim Report, complementing the National Mental Health Consumer Alliance's own submission.

We called for mental health consumers to be meaningfully involved in the planning, management and governance of the mental health system. We argued that genuine co-governance with carers had to allow space for substantive disagreement, not forced consensus. We also advocated for whole-of-government coordination across the systems that shape mental health, from housing to justice, and for a sustainable, properly supported peer workforce.

We also argued that state and national consumer peak bodies needed adequate funding to represent the needs of mental health consumers effectively. The Commission's Final Report later recommended that the next Agreement be co-designed with people with lived experience.

Disability Discrimination Act Review – November 2025

As part of the Australian Government's review of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, BEING made a submission. We advocated for the Act to cover all aspects of public life, including policing, with no specific defences.

We also called for state and territory governments to report annually on their progress in implementing non-police mental health crisis response teams. In line with Disability Royal Commission Recommendation 4.23, we recommended that the burden of proof shift to the respondent once a prima facie case of discrimination had been made.

We also recommended that the comparator test be replaced with a detriment test that centred the lived experience of complainants. We advocated for a positive duty to prevent discrimination, supported by strengthened Disability Action Plans co-designed with people with disability.

Disability Discrimination Act Review: Joint Submission with Welcoming Disability – November 2025

BEING also joined Welcoming Disability in a joint submission to the review of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992,* calling for an end to disability discrimination in Australia's migration system.

Section 52 of the Act exempts the *Migration Act 1958* from its protections, allowing visa applicants to be refused on the basis of disability, including psychosocial disability. We called for the exemption to be removed.

We also called for the migration health requirement to be reformed, including making health waivers available to all visa applicants and ending the rule where one family member's health assessment can fail an entire family's application.

Consistent with our advocacy across the year, the submission also called for Australia to withdraw its interpretative declarations to the CRPD. It made clear that people with disability, including mental health consumers, should be welcomed as full and equal members of the Australian community.

Universal Periodic Review – November 2025

In January 2026, the United Nations Human Rights Council examined Australia's human rights record through the Universal Periodic Review. Ahead of the review, BEING contributed to the Joint NGO Submission on behalf of the Australian NGO Coalition, to ensure the human rights of people with psychosocial disability were part of this international scrutiny.

We highlighted the lack of human rights legal protections for mental health consumers in Australia. On Human Rights Day, 10 December, we also invited our members to write to the Attorney-General calling for stronger human rights protections.

National Mental Health Consumer Alliance

As a foundational member of the National Mental Health Consumer Alliance, BEING worked alongside the Alliance throughout the year to ensure the voices of NSW mental health consumers shaped national policy. BEING co-developed joint submissions with the Alliance on:

- The impact of the NDIS support rules
- The Productivity Commission's Interim Report on its review of the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement
- The human rights of young people, in response to the Australian Government's social media ban for those under 16
- The 2026–27 Federal Budget

Through our NSW Consumer Advisory Group and advisory committees, BEING also contributed to a range of Alliance submissions including, but not limited to:

- A submission to the review of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- A submission to the Senate inquiry into rural, regional and remote Medicare access and funding
- A submission to the Senate inquiry into the NDIS Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Bill 2026
- A submission on the draft models of care for headspace Plus and Youth Specialist Care Centres.

D. POSITION STATEMENTS

Human Rights and Mental Health – September 2025

In September, BEING released its position statement on human rights and mental health. It made clear that all of BEING's work was grounded in the human rights of mental health consumers and in the human rights model of disability.

The statement set out how key articles of the CRPD related to our advocacy priorities in NSW: Article 12 (the right to make decisions about our own treatment), Article 4(3) (the right to be included in policy and service development) and Article 19 (the right to live independently and be included in the community).

We called for the CRPD to be fully integrated into NSW policy frameworks. We called for Australia's interpretative declarations to be withdrawn, and for lived experience representation in governance to be strengthened. We also called for an independent NSW National Preventive Mechanism, in line with Australia's obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture.

The statement was launched at the TheMHS 2025 Annual Conference in Brisbane. There BEING hosted a fishbowl discussion with Sophia Rinaldis (Disability Rights Director, Australian Human Rights Commission), Simon Katterl (CEO, Rise - Queensland's Mental Health Lived Experience peak) and Leilani Darwin (Indigenous Australian Lived Experience Centre).

Armed Conflict and Mental Health – September 2025

Following feedback and requests from our members, BEING released a position statement on armed conflict and mental health. We recognised that global conflicts and polarising public debate had a direct and deeply personal impact on many of our members. The statement unequivocally condemned the loss of civilian life, especially children, in any armed conflict.

Grounded in Article 21 of the CRPD, which protects freedom of expression and opinion, it called for dialogue that respected human rights and our shared humanity, even in disagreement. It also stood firmly against all forms of racism and hate speech, including antisemitism, Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian racism.

Psychosocial Supports – November 2025 (with the National Mental Health Consumer Alliance)

Following the Productivity Commission's Final Report into its review of the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement, BEING was at the forefront of advocating for mental health consumers to co-design psychosocial supports outside the NDIS. Together with the Alliance, BEING released a joint Psychosocial Supports Position Statement setting out what supports should be provided and how they should be commissioned.

It called for a nine-month co-design process led by consumers. It recommended that commissioning be state led through jointly governed state and territory committees, instead of through Primary Health Networks. It also called for lived experience governance to be embedded at every level of the new scheme.

Commonwealth Human Rights Act – April 2026 (with the National Mental Health Consumer Alliance)

Complementing BEING's advocacy for human rights legislation in NSW, BEING and the Alliance released a joint position paper on a Commonwealth Human Rights Act. The paper called for an Act with enforceable duties, accessible complaints pathways and access to the courts. It would protect economic, social and cultural rights such as housing, income, education and work, alongside civil and political rights. It also called for an end to coercive practices, with implementation led by First Nations peoples in line with the Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Declaration.

The National Mental Health Consumer Alliance also released position papers during the year on *Ending Bigotry, Discrimination and Vilification for Mental Health Consumers* (February 2026) and *AI and Digital Mental Health Tools in Australia* (May 2026) that BEING members also contributed to.

E. REPRESENTATIONAL ADVOCACY

BEING's systemic advocacy is strengthened by our representational advocacy, where we bring the consumer voice directly into the committees, working groups and consultations that shape mental health policy and services in NSW.

This year, in line with BEING's 2025–26 Strategic Plan, our representational advocacy extended well beyond the health and mental health systems. It reached the other systems that affect the lives of mental health consumers, including housing, income support, employment, justice and local government.

Within NSW Health, BEING continued to advocate for consumer rights across a wide range of policy and service areas. These included older people's mental health, perinatal, child and youth mental health, family-focused recovery, suicide prevention, mental health rehabilitation, community living supports and the Single Front Door. We also contributed to NSW Health's consultation on a new model for responding to mental health emergencies in the community, and to the review of the Discharge Planning and Transfer of Care Policy Directive.

BEING also continued to grow the capability of NSW mental health consumers to take part in NSW Health activities through our Consumer Register. A growing number of committees now draw consumer advocates directly from the Register. This means more consumers with lived experience are around the decision-making table, while BEING focuses on time-bound review and reform committees, building consumer advocacy capability and running the Register.

Over the 2025–26 financial year, BEING was a member of a wide range of standing and time-bound representational committees, including but not limited to:

- The Agency for Clinical Innovation's Mental Health Network Executive Committee
- The Mental Health Living Longer Steering Committee
- The Older People's Mental Health Working Group
- The Expert Reference Group for the review of the Older People's Mental Health Community Model of Care
- The Perinatal, Child and Youth Mental Health Advisory Group
- The Family Focused Recovery Implementation Committee
- The Your Experience of Service (YES) and Carer Experience of Service (CES) Advisory Committee
- The Whole of Health Towards Zero Suicides in Care Policy Advisory Group
- The ConnectMH Single Front Door Advisory Group
- The Housing and Mental Health Agreement 2022 State Steering Committee
- The Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative (HASI) Review Committee and Community Living Supports Evaluation Committee
- The NSW Health Mental Health Partnership Network
- The Expert Reference Group for the Discharge Planning and Transfer of Care Policy Directive review
- The NSW Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy Advisory Committee, and
- The Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network Lived Experience Advisory Committee

6. Marketing and Communications

A. YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2025–26, BEING significantly expanded its communications reach and impact. We grew our output across all channels, increasing the volume and variety of our content, responding rapidly to current affairs, and using strategic communications to advance our advocacy priorities. The results reflect strong growth across every key metric. Feedback from funders and partner organisations on BEING's growing profile has been consistently positive. The growth of our digital audience demonstrates a deepening connection with mental health consumers across NSW, bringing with it both affirmation and constructive challenge: exactly what a representative body should attract.

B. SECTOR EVENTS

BEING also brought the consumer voice to forums and events across the sector throughout the year. These included the Australian Guardianship and Administration Council, the National Justice Project's Alternative First Responders Symposium, the Rural Mental Health Conference, the Mental Health Coordinating Council's CEO and Leaders Forum, the One Door Mental Health Symposium, the United Nations Association of Australia's World Health Day event and the Australian Government's Disability Representative Organisations Forum.

C. BEING EVENTS

Mental Health Month 2025

Much of Australia experienced climate-related extreme weather events over the summer of 2024/25 with temperatures topping 40°C in Melbourne and Sydney, over 200 fires ignited in Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales, destroying over 700 structures and burning more than 400,000 hectares.

Consequently, and aligning with the World Federation for Mental Health theme of "Access to Services - Mental health in Catastrophes and Emergencies," for Mental Health Month, we held a panel discussion on 17 October in the NSW Parliament Theatrette entitled "Climate Change and Mental Health – A Ticking Timebomb?"

Chaired by BEING CEO Giancarlo de Vera, our panellists were: Dr. Amanda Cohn MLC, (Greens spokesperson on mental health) Dr Cybele Dey (Sydney-based Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Conjoint Senior Lecturer and PhD Candidate at UNSW, and member of Doctors for the Environment Australia), Nirvana Talukder (law student and Australian Youth Climate Coalition member) Annie Monks (a Northern Rivers queer, Aboriginal woman who worked at the Medicare Mental Health Centre in Lismore during the 2022 floods), and Butch Young (who served as Mental Health Commander at Batemans Bay's Hanging Rock evacuation centre during the Black Summer bushfires).

Key themes the event explored included:

- Eco-Distress: How uncertainty and awareness of a warming climate weigh on psychological well-being, particularly for young people,
- Disaster Trauma: The lived aftermath and community trauma following extreme weather events like floods and bushfires and
- Support Frameworks: Elevating consumer perspectives in shaping climate-aware mental health policies and community resilience. (A recording of the event can be viewed on our YouTube channel.)

Annual General Meeting

On Thursday, 6 November 2025 BEING hosted its Annual General Meeting. Building on the success of a multi-tiered event in 2024, the AGM provided a full day of activity.

Poetry Workshop

Local artists Ying Chin and Olly Moore started the day hosting an interactive poetry workshop where they performed some of their work and then led a self-reflection exercise accompanied beautifully by Ying playing the lap harp.

AGM

The formal AGM business proceeded without event, including confirmation that standing directors Rachael Laidler, William Woods and Richard Hendrie were all returned to the board.

Keynote Address – Priscilla Brice

We were delighted to welcome former BEING CEO Priscilla Brice back to BEING to make a keynote address as CEO of the National Mental Health Consumer Alliance (the Alliance), the national peak body which the government approved in July 2024. Mx Brice shared the Alliance's newly completed Strategic Plan and presented results from the first national Human Rights Survey to be developed and led by mental health consumers.

Distinguished Service Awards

BEING's Distinguished Service Awards were introduced in 2024 to acknowledge exceptional contribution and achievement in advancement of the mental health consumer movement.

In 2025, the board bestowed this honour on three new inductees:

1. Fay Jackson BCVA, DipEd. AECD, EBE

Fay is the Founder of Vision In Mind which offers Professional Supervision for people in Lived Experience roles, consultancy and co-supervision to visionary clinicians and executives. She is a Lived Experience Expertise consultant and systemic advocate. She has had a long career forging new roles in the Lived Experience movement including Inaugural Deputy Commissioner of the NSW Mental Health Commission, General Manager, Inclusion at Flourish Australia, Director of Consumer, Carer and Community Affairs with SESIAHS, Peer Manager and was one of the original 8 paid Peer Workers in NSW.

Over three decades Fay has sat on multiple state and federal committees. She has served as a Board member for NSW CAG, BEING and SHIFT and was instrumental in establishing the National Lived Experience Alliance (The Alliance).

Fay conceived of and drove the "Why Not A Peer Worker?" strategy for Flourish which was a major influence in establishing a large Peer Workforce across the NFP sector in Australia and internationally. She was the first Lived Experience Speaker for BeyondBlue and the Rotary Health Research Fund.

Fay is a multi-award winner in human rights and disability rights including being awarded the International Meritorious Service to Community medal. Recently Fay was appointed to the Older Persons Affinity Group and is mentoring and supporting Peer Workers through the Peers Supporting Peers online conversations.

Fay has written and published peer reviewed papers in international journals and was one of the writers and editors of the Peer Work in Australia Book and the Handbook of Rural, Remote and Very Remote Mental Health. Fay frequently appears in the media prosecuting the rights and capabilities of people living with mental health challenges, with an energy and passion that is unparalleled.

2. Douglas Holmes OAM, EBE

For over 30 years, Douglas has devoted himself wholeheartedly to bringing the needs of mental health consumers to the attention of government and NSW Health serving on committees and boards of numerous mental health organisations at both state and national level including as an executive officer with BEING.

Douglas was a founding member of the Australian Mental Health Consumer Network and

worked as a peer worker for over 10 years at St Vincent's Sydney helping to establish the Hearing Voices Network NSW.

Douglas was instrumental in promoting and creating the Cert IV in Peer Work, a foundational mental health sector qualification.

In 2014 Douglas was awarded the TheMHS Exceptional Contribution Award and in 2018 the Order of Australia Medal for his contribution to the mental health sector.

3. Allison Kokany EBE (post.)

Allison had a long career in mental health in NSW including six years as chair of the NSW Consumer Advisory Group, the forerunner for BEING – Mental Health Consumers. She was also the NSW consumer representative on the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum, a dedicated Official Visitor, a consumer consultant at WentWest Primary Health Network and the Consumer Representative on the inaugural NDIA Steering Committee, contributing to the design and development of the NDIS to be responsive to the needs of those with psychosocial disability.

Allison fought for systemic change for all mental health consumers, working with the NSW Mental Health Commission to deliver law and policy reforms. She was particularly proud of her part in reforming legislation and policy reform around the use of seclusion and restraint in psychiatric hospital settings and emergency departments.

Recognising the critical impact of first responders' behaviour on people with mental health challenges, and the benefits to consumers if it were improved, Allison took a lead role in the introduction and implementation of mental health training for first responders including police officers, paramedics, psychiatrists and GPs.

After her passing in 2018, WentWest established the Allison Kokany Scholarship in her name to honour her exemplary contribution.

Allison's daughter Rebecca accepted the award on her mother's behalf and expressed pride and appreciation for both the award and what Allison's legacy means to the NSW consumer movement.

D. MEDIA

Across 2025-26 we generated a total of 279 mentions across all media, more than double the number for the previous year. Across the year, we issued a total of 13 media releases on key topics such as: alternatives to the police as first responders (July and October 2025), calls for a Human Rights Act (Feb and March 2026), demand for the release of the government's mental healthcare gap analysis (June 2026), and reaction to the ABC 4 Corners episode "Brutal Force" (June 2026.)

In total, our media releases were opened and read 1,255 times by journalists.

Over the year we also responded to multiple media approaches for spokespeople to provide their lived and living experience as a mental health consumer. We responded to these with a combination of CEO and BEING member lived experience interviews. We thank every one of our members who stepped forward to share their lived experience in a media interview. The value of your contribution is priceless and the impact of your confidence and advocacy is invaluable to our work.

E. MAD MONDAY MEMO

BEING's weekly newsletter is a critical part of our communications strategy. Capable of carrying fairly longform content, not only is it our primary means of keeping our members informed, but increasingly it is helping us educate and shift the mindset of decision-makers outside our organisation and the general population.

At the beginning of 2026 we performed a "deep clean" on our database to remove duplications, and dormant or redundant email addresses resulting in a more accurate subscriber base of 1,960 subscribers. In absolute terms this appears as a reduction, but in real terms it still reflects a 7.8% increase year on year. Over the past 12 months, we sent out a total of 52 Mad Monday Memo email newsletters. Our engagement levels for MMM remain very high with an average open rate of 45%, down slightly from 47% in FY25. The total number of emails though increased to 130,037.

F. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media communications continue to be an important area of activity for not-for-profits like BEING, offering a quick, affordable way to share content, promote issues and grow reach. We have worked hard over the year to increase our posting frequency, and engage member voices, increasing the total number of posts from 500 in 2024-25 to 1,169 in 2025-26 (+134%.) Collectively we grew our total social media audience by 1,293 unique followers to 10,169 in 2025-26 (+63%): Facebook (4,316, +12.3%), LinkedIn (2,944, +32%) and Instagram (642, +23.9%). Followers on X/ Twitter remained steady at 2,267 (+0.1%), despite the continuing weakening of audience globally. Our engagement rate increased for the fourth year in a row from 7.1% to 7.4%, reflecting our quality first approach and efforts to generate a higher level of response to our posts.

G. WEBSITE

BEING's website is the hub of our communication activities, providing in-depth information and resources that inform our community and illustrate our systemic advocacy work. In 2025-26, we published a total of 40 blog posts up from 18 in 2024-25 featuring media releases, news stories, report publications and media responses. The total number of unique visitors to the BEING website in 2025-26 more than doubled to over 20k from 9.6k (+105%.), of which 45% were direct visitors and 45% came through organic search. Despite the excellent performance of our website over the past 12 months, we have started plans to refresh it to better support the needs of different users coming to our site and look forward to reporting on that next year.

“Having a Mental Health Crisis is Not a Crime” Campaign

52 people were killed by police while experiencing a mental health crisis in New South Wales over a 5 year period. Hundreds more have faced violence and imprisonment, because the system insisted on a police response to mental health emergencies, instead of a health-led response.

THE JOINT STATEMENT

“Having a Mental Health Crisis Is Not a Crime” was coordinated by BEING and released on 23 June 2026 to coincide with NSW budget night highlighting the human cost of underfunding mental health services, with death by police violence an example of what happens when the system fails.

The statement was co-signed by more than 30 organisations including mental health, justice reform and human rights organisation. It set out four asks:

1. Fully fund critical mental health services in NSW.
2. Prioritise investment in community-based programs
3. Make health-led responses the default for mental health emergencies
4. Legislate a NSW Human Rights Act.

THE VIGIL

To launch the joint statement, we held a candlelight vigil outside NSW Parliament on NSW Budget night, alongside families, advocates, consumers and parliamentarians, with boards carrying the names of people who have died.

The families of the victims shared their stories, including Nichole and Sharee Knott, Leesa Topic and Judy Deacon, supported by speakers from BEING, the National Justice Project and Wayside Chapel.

It was a moment of collective grieving and solidarity. It was also a moment of great hope, that in the depths of darkness, our togetherness can bring light and warmth.

THE SCREENING

The vigil was followed by a screening of the ABC Four Corners "***Brutal Force***" documentary inside NSW Parliament House, co-hosted by BEING and Dr Amanda Cohn MLC.

The panel that followed was moderated by ABC journalist Dylan Welch, and brought together Dr Amanda Cohn MLC, BEING CEO Giancarlo de Vera, Dr Ian Korbel (Chair, RANZCP NSW Branch), and Judy Deacon, Jesse's mother.

Getting a documentary about police conduct screened inside Parliament House, with the families present and the Ministers invited, was a deliberate act to place the evidence where decisions are made to ensure Parliamentarians could not look away from the impact of their lack of action.

PARLIAMENT

The following morning, Dr Amanda Cohn moved a private member's motion in the Legislative Council, calling for a health-led response to mental health emergencies. The motion incorporated our joint statement and placed all four asks in full on the parliamentary record.

MEDIA

Coverage followed in the Sydney Morning Herald and Crikey, with BEING's CEO and consumer advocate Carly Richardson amplifying the lived-experience case.

THE RESULT

On 30 July 2026, the NSW Government announced more than $270 million over ten years for a health-led response model: a statewide Virtual Mental Health Hub within NSW Ambulance, and Mental Health Acute Assessment Teams pairing paramedics with mental health nurses to be first responders.

This win belongs to years of advocacy and the families who would not let this go.

OUR CONTINUED RESPONSE

This is not the end of the campaign. Three of our four asks remain outstanding. We will continue to advocate for their full implementation in 2027.

7. Governance

A. BOARD

The 2025-26 board was chaired by Tim Heffernan, with Heidi Keevers serving as Deputy Chair. The board's membership remained stable throughout the year, with the following directors serving alongside the Chair and Deputy Chair:

- Russell Barratt
- Catherine Garner
- Richard Hendrie
- Rachael Laidler
- Stephen Smith
- Binoe Verghese
- William Woods

During the year, the board continued to provide strategic leadership and governance oversight to support BEING's vision and purpose. The board maintained a strong focus on financial stewardship, organisational sustainability, governance effectiveness, risk management and the delivery of outcomes for mental health consumers across New South Wales.

Building on work commenced in the previous year, the board continued to explore opportunities to diversify BEING's revenue base and strengthen the organisation's long-term sustainability. The board also played an active role in the development of BEING's Theory of Change and Impact Measurement Framework, participating in workshops and providing feedback throughout the process to help shape a framework that will support BEING to better measure and demonstrate its impact.

The board completed its biannual review of governance policies, reviewing and approving 16 policies covering areas of governance, risk management, workplace practices and information management. This work strengthened BEING's governance framework and supported ongoing compliance with legislative and best practice requirements.

As a board comprised entirely of people with lived experience of mental health challenges, the needs, rights and interests of mental health consumers remained central to all board discussions and decisions throughout the year.

The board extends its sincere thanks to Susan Walker for her continued support and expertise as Company Secretary.

B. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

The BEING Audit and Risk Committee (BARC) was chaired by Russell Barratt and consisted of board directors, Rachael Laidler and Binoe Verghese. During 2025-26, the BARC welcomed Mark Laidler as an independent member, strengthening the BARC's skills and expertise in governance, risk, compliance and financial services.

Throughout the year, the BARC continued to provide oversight of BEING's financial management, risk framework, internal controls and governance obligations. The BARC supported the board in monitoring organisational performance and maintaining a strong focus on financial stewardship, organisational sustainability and effective risk management.

A key focus of the BARC's work was supporting the board's biannual policy review process. This included consideration of emerging risks and opportunities, including the development of BEING's approach to artificial intelligence.

The board and management thank all BARC members for their expertise, diligence and commitment to maintaining strong governance practices across the organisation.

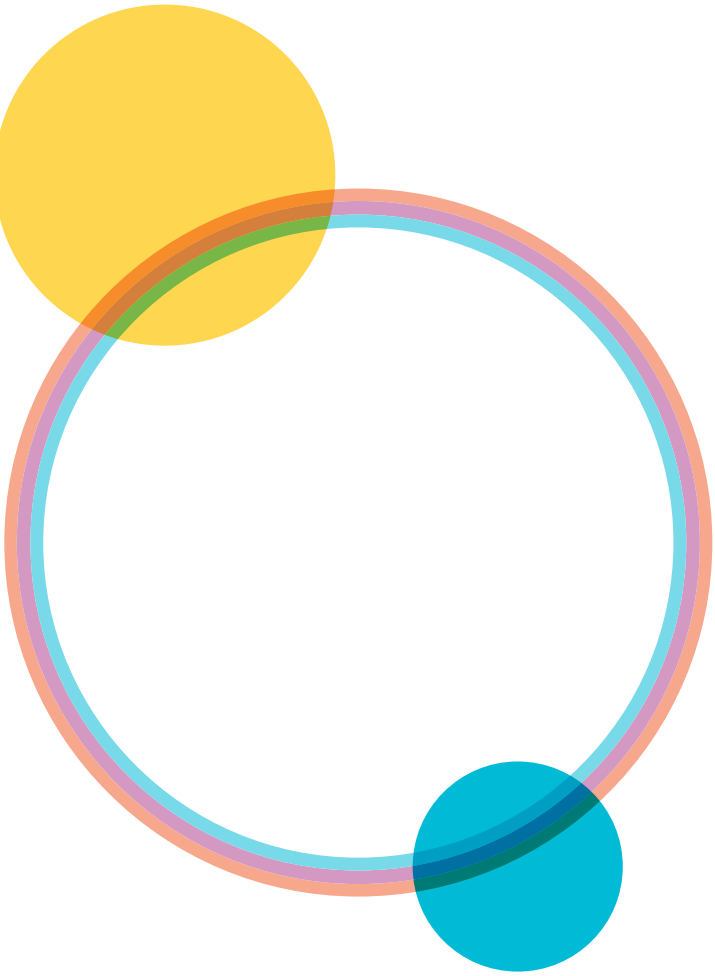
C. MEMBERSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE

The membership subcommittee, chaired by Rachael Laidler, continued its work in 2025-26 to support the board's consideration of membership diversification and the introduction of corporate partnerships as part of BEING's broader funding diversification strategy.

Building on the exploratory work undertaken in 2024-25, the subcommittee focused on the potential introduction of organisational membership as a mechanism to support these opportunities and contribute to BEING's long-term sustainability. This included consideration of governance, resource and constitutional implications of expanding BEING's membership categories, as well as safeguards to ensure any future corporate partnerships remain aligned with BEING's values and purpose.

The subcommittee also considered due diligence and negative screening approaches for prospective corporate partners, and reviewed the organisational capability and resources required to support implementation of the corporate partnerships strategy.

Following member approval of the constitutional changes at BEING's 2025 AGM, the subcommittee endorsed a governance roadmap to guide implementation of BEING's corporate partnerships strategy.



8. Operations

A. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Building on the work undertaken in 2024-25 to identify opportunities to diversify BEING's funding base, the organisation continued to progress the two priority growth areas of corporate partnerships and philanthropy.

During the year, BEING commenced development of a Theory of Change, Impact measurement framework and case for support. These initiatives provide a clearer articulation of BEING's contribution to improving outcomes for mental health consumers, improve the organisation's ability to demonstrate and communicate its impact, and further highlight the value of lived experience leadership in driving mental health reform.

Together, this work establishes a strong foundation for future growth by enabling BEING to clearly articulate its unique role within the mental health sector, the outcomes it seeks to achieve, and the impact it delivers for mental health consumers across New South Wales. In doing so, it better positions the organisation to build strategic partnerships and pursue opportunities that support its long-term sustainability and impact.

B. ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY AND IMPACT

As outlined above, during 2025-26, BEING invested in a range of initiatives to build organisational capability, improve strategic alignment and establish a more robust approach to measuring and demonstrating impact.

A key focus was the development of BEING's theory of change and impact measurement framework. Developed in partnership with the Social Impact Hub and informed by contributions from staff, board directors, and advisory

committee members, this work has established a clear line of sight between BEING's activities, the outcomes they generate, and the longer-term impact the organisation seeks to achieve for mental health consumers and the broader community. Once implemented, the framework will support evidence-informed decision-making, organisational learning, consistent impact measurement and ongoing assessment of BEING's effectiveness.

BEING also undertook a review of its member engagement, communication and knowledge-sharing assets to better understand how these resources contribute to strategic objectives and member outcomes. The review informed the development of a strategic framework that positions BEING's education and information offerings as a connected, consumer-led ecosystem centred on the themes of learning, engagement and leadership.

By creating clearer pathways between resources, participation opportunities and leadership activities, the framework will support a more cohesive member experience, improve accessibility and understanding of BEING's offerings, and enhance the contribution of these assets to organisational impact and future growth.

To further support organisational effectiveness, BEING also introduced a project management framework and supporting tools to promote consistent planning, delivery, oversight and evaluation of projects across the organisation. This initiative has enhanced governance, transparency and accountability while supporting alignment with BEING's strategic priorities.

C.GOVERNANCE AND SYSTEMS

BEING continued to develop its governance and operational systems to support organisational effectiveness, accountability, and sustainable growth.

A key area of focus was ensuring governance frameworks, policies and practices remain contemporary and responsive to the organisation's changing needs and operating environment. This included the review of 16 policies covering governance, risk management, information management, workplace practices and organisational operations.

BEING also advanced its approach to managing emerging technologies through the development of an artificial intelligence policy and the incorporation of AI-related considerations into governance and risk management processes.

Collectively, these initiatives support a culture of continuous improvement and provide a solid platform for BEING's future development.

9. 2026-27 Strategic Plan

OUR VISION

All mental health decisions in NSW are decided in active partnership with people who have lived experience of mental health issues

OUR MISSION

We represent people with mental health issues to ensure that lived experience is heard and reflected in decision making, service provision and our communities

STRATEGIC PILLARS

LIVED EXPERIENCE ENGAGEMENT
Amplifying the voices of people often unheard.

LIVED EXPERIENCE LEADERSHIP
Embedding lived experience expertise in mental health systems.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT
Promoting human rights in all decisions that impact consumers.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP
Cement the consumer voice as central to mental health conversations.

POLICY PRIORITIES

REFORM MODELS OF CARE
Advocate for human rights-based models of care.

EMBED LIVED EXPERIENCE EXPERTISE
Embed lived experience expertise in decision-making at every level.

IMPROVE SYSTEMS ACCESSIBILITY
Work in partnership with others to ensure systems are accessible for all mental health consumers.

INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKING
Drive trusted and influential consumer-led advocacy across the NSW Government's agenda.

OUR VALUES

RESPECT & DIGNITY
For inclusion and connection

SOCIAL JUSTICE & EQUITY
For participation for all

BELIEF IN RECOVERY
Everyone's journey is possible

INTEGRITY
Act with transparency and accountability

FIDELITY
Represent consumers genuinely and faithfully

10. Financials and Auditor's Report

Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited

ABN 82 549 537 349

Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2026

Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 $	2025 $
Revenue			
Revenue from contracts with customers	4	1,249,358	1,142,407
Other income	5	27,954	23,058
Total revenue		**1,277,312**	**1,165,465**
Expenses			
Administration and other operating costs		(422,155)	(236,883)
Depreciation and amortisation		(3,955)	(6,222)
Employee benefits		(850,388)	(630,411)
Lease payments for short-term/low-value leases		(104,768)	(101,264)
Net loss on sale of property, plant and equipment		-	(6,043)
Total expenses		**(1,381,266)**	**(980,823)**
(Deficit)/surplus before income tax		**(103,954)**	**184,642**
Income tax expense		-	-
(Deficit)/surplus for the year		**(103,954)**	**184,642**
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive (loss)/income		**(103,954)**	**184,642**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
Statement of Financial Position
As at 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 $	2025 $
Assets			
Current			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	639,429	863,583
Trade and other receivables	7	22,288	23,997
Other financial assets	8	314,250	300,000
Other assets	9	43,145	17,001
Total current assets		**1,019,112**	**1,204,581**
Non-current			
Property, plant and equipment	10	7,944	5,554
Intangible assets	11	-	-
Total non-current assets		**7,944**	**5,554**
Total assets		**1,027,056**	**1,210,135**
Liabilities			
Current			
Trade and other payables	12	115,194	95,770
Provisions	13	55,498	38,843
Contract liabilities	14	17,084	150,000
Total current liabilities		**187,776**	**284,613**
Non-current			
Provisions	13	17,712	-
Total non-current liabilities		**17,712**	**-**
Total liabilities		**205,488**	**284,613**
Net assets		**821,568**	**925,522**
Equity			
Accumulated funds		821,568	925,522
Total equity		**821,568**	**925,522**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
Statement of Changes in Equity
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	Accumulated Funds $	Total Equity $
Balance at 1 July 2024		740,880	**740,880**
Surplus for the year		184,642	**184,642**
Other comprehensive income		-	**-**
Total comprehensive income		184,642	**184,642**
Balance at 30 June 2025		925,522	**925,522**
Balance at 1 July 2025		925,522	**925,522**
Deficit for the year		(103,954)	**(103,954)**
Other comprehensive income		-	**-**
Total comprehensive loss		(103,954)	**(103,954)**
Balance at 30 June 2026		821,568	**821,568**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
Statement of Cash Flows
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026	2025
		$	$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts from grants, donors, customers and others		1,257,848	1,291,537
Payments to suppliers and employees		(1,475,657)	(1,019,687)
Interest received		14,250	725
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities		**(203,559)**	**272,575**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for property, plant and equipment		(6,345)	(1,862)
Net investment in term deposits		(14,250)	(300,000)
Net cash used in investing activities		**(20,595)**	**(301,862)**
Cash flows from financing activities		-	-
Net cash provided by financing activities		-	-
Net change in cash and cash equivalents		(224,154)	(29,287)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year		863,583	892,870
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	6	**639,429**	**863,583**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

1. General information

The financial statements cover Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited, a company limited by guarantee, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. The entity is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards and a registered charity under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.*

The principal activity of the entity is acting as independent, state-wide peak body for mental health consumers in NSW, providing policy advocacy, consumer training, stakeholder consultation and representation and research on mental service needs.

Principal place of business is Suite 2.03, Level 2, 3 Spring Street, Sydney, 2000.

The financial report was authorised for issue by the Board on 8 October 2026.

2. Changes in accounting policies

New and amended Australian Accounting Standards that are effective for the current year
The entity has adopted all the new and revised standards and interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that are relevant to its operations and effective for an accounting period that begins on or after 1 July 2025.

There were no revised standards or amendments, effective for the current year, that have had a significant impact on the entity.

Accounting Standards issued but not yet effective and not been adopted early by the entity
A number of new and revised standards have been issued but are not yet effective and have not been adopted early by the entity. The Board is currently assessing the impact such standards will have on the entity.

3. Summary of material accounting policy information

Financial reporting framework
The general purpose financial statements of the entity have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.*

Statement of compliance
The general purpose financial statements of the entity have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.

Basis of preparation
The financial statements are presented in Australian Dollars ($), which is also the functional currency of the entity.

The material accounting policy information that has been adopted in the preparation of this report is as follows:

Revenue from contracts with customers
Revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the entity expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services.

Revenue is recognised by applying a five-step model as follows:
1. Identify the contract with the customer
2. Identify the performance obligations
3. Determine the transaction price
4. Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations
5. Recognise revenue as and when control of the performance obligations is transferred

Income tax
No provision for income tax has been raised as the entity is exempt from income tax as a registered charity under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.*

Property, plant and equipment
Depreciation
The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated over the asset's useful life to the entity, commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The useful lives used for each class of depreciable assets are:

Class of fixed asset	Useful lives
Office furniture and computer equipment	3 years

Intangible assets
Finite life intangible assets
Finite life intangible assets are subsequently measured at cost less amortisation and any impairment. The method and useful lives of finite life intangible assets are reviewed annually.

Trade and other payables
These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the entity prior to the end of the financial year and which are unpaid. Due to the short-term nature, they are measured at amortised cost and are not discounted. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

Liabilities relating to contracts with customers
Contract liabilities
A contract liability is recognised if a payment is received or a payment is due (whichever is earlier) from a customer before the entity transfers the related goods or services/grant conditions are fulfilled. Contract liabilities include deferred income. Contract liabilities are recognised as revenue when the entity performs under the contract (i.e., transfers control of the related goods or services to the customer/fulfils conditions of the grant).

Comparative figures
Where required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year. With the exception of reclassifications between certain financial statement line items, comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

Significant judgement in applying accounting policies
When preparing the financial statements, management undertakes a number of judgements, estimates and assumptions about the recognition and measurement of assets, liabilities, income and expenses.

Estimation uncertainty
Information about estimates and assumptions that have the most significant effect on recognition and measurement of assets, liabilities, income and expenses is provided below. Actual results may be substantially different.

Useful lives of depreciable/amortisable assets
Management reviews its estimate of the useful lives of depreciable/amortisable assets at each reporting date, based on the expected utility of the assets. Uncertainties in these estimates relate to technical obsolescence that may change the utility of certain depreciable/amortisable assets.

Long service leave
The liability for long service leave is recognised and measured at the present value of the estimated cash flows to be made in respect of all employees at the reporting date. In determining the present value of the liability, estimates of attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation have been taken into account.

	2026 $	2025 $
4. Revenue from contracts with customers		
Revenue recognised over time		
State government:		
Grants - Health Administration Corporation	1,139,574	1,054,707
Grants - NSW Ministry of Health	26,000	20,200
Service contract revenue	72,916	65,000
Education and training income	10,868	2,500
	1,249,358	**1,142,407**

How the entity recognises revenue

Grants

If conditions are attached to a grant, revenue is recognised when the entity satisfies those conditions.

Service contract revenue, education and training income

Revenue relating to service contract, education and training is recognised over the period to which the service is provided.

5. Other income		
Interest income	12,655	14,546
Donations	4,729	161
Other income	10,570	8,351
	27,954	**23,058**
6. Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand	-	300
Cash at bank	639,429	863,283
	639,429	**863,583**
7. Trade and other receivables		
Current		
Trade receivables	4,144	4,258
Interest receivable	12,226	13,821
Deposits	5,918	5,918
	22,288	**23,997**
8. Other financial assets		
Current		
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Term deposits	314,250	300,000
	314,250	**300,000**

	2026 $	2025 $
9. Other assets		
Current		
Prepayments	43,145	17,001
	43,145	**17,001**
10. Property, plant and equipment		
Office furniture and computer equipment at cost	20,066	22,892
Office furniture and computer equipment accumulated depreciation	(12,122)	(17,338)
	7,944	**5,554**

	Office Furniture & Computer Equipment $	Total $
Net carrying amount 1 July 2025	5,554	**5,554**
Additions	6,345	**6,345**
Disposals	-	**-**
Depreciation	(3,955)	**(3,955)**
Net carrying amount 30 June 2026	7,944	**7,944**

	2026 $	2025 $
11. Intangible assets		
Website at costs	13,000	23,400
Website accumulated amortisation	(13,000)	(23,400)
	-	**-**

	Website $	Total $
Net carrying amount 1 July 2025	-	**-**
Additions	-	**-**
Disposals	-	**-**
Amortisation	-	**-**
Net carrying amount 30 June 2026	-	**-**

	2026 $	2025 $
12. Trade and other payables		
Current		
Accrued expenses	98,765	68,789
Net GST payable	11,452	26,981
Other payables	4,977	-
	115,194	**95,770**
13. Provisions		
Current		
Provision for annual leave	55,498	38,843
	55,498	**38,843**
Non-current		
Provision for long service leave	17,712	-
	17,712	**-**
14. Contract liabilities		
Current		
Contract liabilities - government grants	-	150,000
Contract liabilities - deferred revenue	17,084	-
	17,084	**150,000**

15. Related parties

The entity's related parties include its members, key management personnel and related entities. Transactions between related parties are on normal commercial terms and conditions no more favourable than those available to other parties.

A member of the key management personnel of the entity is also on the Board of another organisation who was a party to a Service Level Agreement with the entity during the current financial year.

	2026 $	2025 $
Key management personnel compensation		
Total key management personnel compensation	313,458	158,844
16. Remuneration of auditors		
SDJA		
Audit of financial report	6,000	-
Assistance with financial report preparation	1,500	-
	7,500	**-**

	2026 $	2025 $
16. Remuneration of auditors (continued)		
Thomas Davis & Co.		
Audit of financial report	-	7,500
	-	**7,500**

17. Economic dependency

The entity's continuing operations are dependent on the receipt of government grants for financial support.

18. Commitments

The entity had no material unrecognised contractual commitments as at 30 June 2026 (2025: Nil).

19. Contingent liabilities

The entity had no contingent liabilities as at 30 June 2026 (2025: Nil).

20. Subsequent events

Subsequent to year end, the entity entered into a short-term lease agreement for office premises commencing 20 July 2026 and ending on 30 June 2027.

No other adjusting or significant non-adjusting events have occurred between 30 June 2026 and the date of authorisation of these accounts.

Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
Responsible Persons' Declaration
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

The Responsible Persons declare that in the Responsible Persons' opinion:

a) the financial statements and notes are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

   i) giving a true and fair view of the registered entity's financial position as at 30 June 2026 and of its performance for the year then ended; and

   ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*; and

b) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*.

Tim Heffernan
Chairperson
8 October 2026

Russell Barratt
Audit and Risk Chair
8 October 2026

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Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
Auditor's Independence Declaration to the Board of Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, as lead auditor for the audit of Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited for the year ended 30 June 2026, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

a) No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and

b) No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

SDJA

SDJA

Simon Joyce
Director
8 October 2026
Sydney, New South Wales

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

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Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

Opinion
We have audited the financial report of Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited (the registered entity), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2026, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of material accounting policy information, and the responsible persons' declaration.

In our opinion, the financial report of Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (ACNC Act), including:

(a) giving a true and fair view of the registered entity's financial position as at 30 June 2026 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and

(b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*.

Basis for Opinion
We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the registered entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsible Persons' Responsibility for the Financial Report
The responsible persons of the registered entity are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the ACNC Act, and for such internal control as the responsible persons determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the responsible persons are responsible for assessing the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible persons either intend to liquidate the registered entity or to cease operations or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The responsible persons are responsible for overseeing the registered entity's financial reporting process.

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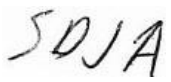
Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Being - Mental Health Consumers Limited
For the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2026

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

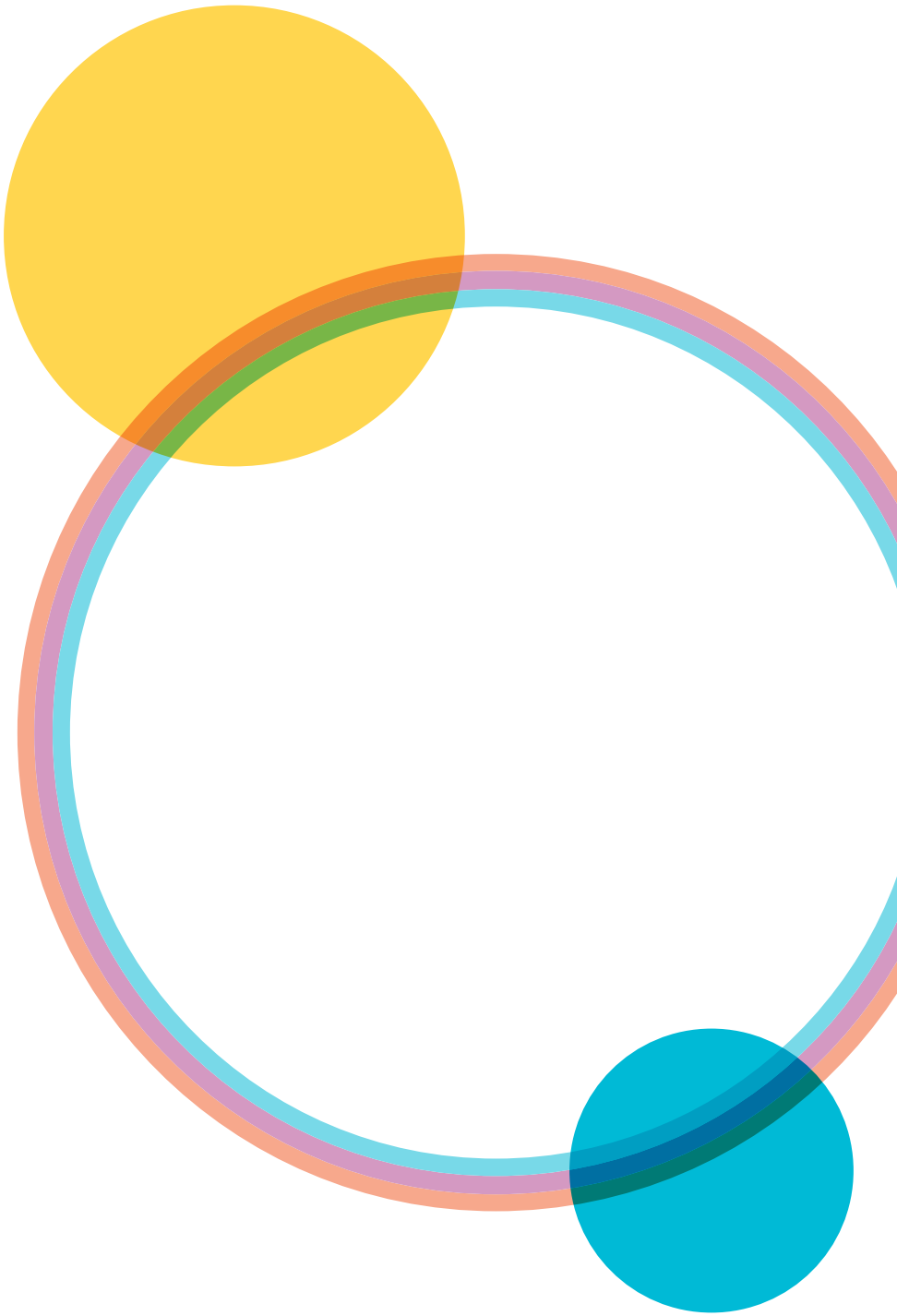
Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: http://www.auasb.gov.au/. This description forms part of our auditor's report.



SDJA

Simon Joyce
Director
8 October 2026
Sydney, New South Wales



Being
Mental Health Consumers

BEING - Mental Health Consumers

info@being.org.au

1300 234 640

Photo credit: National Mental Health Consumer Alliance, 2025 Symposium: Beyond Representation.