



2016  
2017

THE ROAD HOME  
The Repat Foundation



**WE ARE DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF OUR NATION'S VETERANS, EMERGENCY SERVICE PERSONNEL AND THEIR FAMILIES. THROUGH RAISING AWARENESS AND FUNDS TO SUPPORT RESEARCH AND PROGRAMS WE CAN DELIVER OPTIMAL MODELS OF CARE AND HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR OUR SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES.**

**WE ARE PROUD TO SUPPORT HEALTH AND WELLBEING RESEARCH AND PROGRAMS INTO CONDITIONS SUCH AS POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS FOR THOSE SUFFERING IN SILENCE AND WE WILL CONTINUE PROTECTING THOSE WHO PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE TO PROTECT OURSELVES AND OUR NATION.**

*Image: L-R SA Police Commissioner Grant Stevens, Deputy Commissioner Linda Williams and SES Chief Officer Chris Beattie.*

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# ACTING CHAIR REPORT: BRIGADIER ALISON CREAGH CSC (RET'D)



I am honoured, as Acting Chair of the Board of Governors for The Road Home, to present to you our Annual Report for the 2016/17 financial year. We have had a busy and successful year of growth and I am thankful for the support of our generous community in helping us raise awareness, fund research and provide

programs that work to support care and health outcomes for Australia's veterans, emergency service personnel and their families.

The Board of Governors would like to recognise the significant contribution made to The Road Home by Air-Vice Marshal Brent Espeland AM (Ret'd) who passed away in late September 2017. Air-Vice Marshal Espeland served as Chair of The Road Home and as a Director of The Hospital Research Foundation along with a number of important leadership roles in the veteran community. The Board of Governors will continue to champion support for veterans, emergency service personnel and their families in his memory.

The Board of Governors continues to work hard to establish strong national representation in the Veteran, Emergency Service and Families sectors, attracting new Governors to support these areas. We welcome Commissioner Greg Mullins (Ret'd) who has recently retired from the NSW Fire and Emergency Services, bringing unique strengths and knowledge to our group. Mrs Gabrielle Sasse has also recently joined the Board of Governors to ensure we better understand and support the interests of families.

**Looking forward, we are considering future opportunities and our role in strengthening research and advocacy as a major philanthropic funder of health and wellbeing research for veterans, emergency service personnel and their families. Thanks to the kind support of our donors, we are identifying emerging research themes and taking note of gaps in knowledge and services that will allow us to better shape the future direction and priorities for The Road Home.**

This year, The Road Home has been pleased to fund three new exciting research projects through both the University of South Australia (UniSA) and Flinders

University. You can read about these on Page 18. We also launched the Invictus Pathways Program, in collaboration with UniSA, including a new three year PhD Scholarship for a student to investigate the effect of participating in the Invictus Games program for current Australian Defence Force personnel as well as veterans. This opportunity for research has allowed us to expand our 'arts in health' program to a comprehensive Wellbeing Program that incorporates a weekly activities program with arts and sport based on a peer support model. This need for service delivery has stemmed from current gaps in South Australia for veterans.

Understanding the efficacy of these Wellbeing programs is essential if we want to see these types of Wellbeing therapy programs more widely implemented across society to assist our heroes and their families find their road home. We need to understand why these programs work and how they might be improved by delivering compelling, research-based results on their impact. This can only be done with independently reviewed world-class research. The Road Home gives us the ability to fundraise for these critical research projects and its programs on a national basis and we are excited about the expected outcomes of these projects. We're only just beginning to scratch the surface, but the opportunity for research in this field is immeasurable.

The Road Home appreciates the support from Melinda OLeary, Chair of The Hospital Research Foundation and its Board, and Chief Executive Paul Flynn who leads the hardworking team. To Karen May, Executive General Manager for The Road Home, thank you for your commitment to our organisation, playing a key role in its growth and success.

To our partners and donors – thank you again for your support. We look forward to continuing our work with your help to support those who put themselves in harm's way to protect us.

# EXECUTIVE GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT: KAREN MAY



**"I think a hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles."**  
- Christopher Reeve

Our country is full of heroes. Heroes who serve overseas to protect our freedoms and heroes who work hard every day to keep us safe in our own community. Then we must not forget the families. They are heroes too. It's this collective group of Australians that we must fight so hard to protect. I am so proud that The Road Home does this with your support through exciting research that is helping to inform the treatment and services available to our veterans, emergency service personnel and their families.

We are now part of The Hospital Research Foundation (THRF) group that has invested heavily into the capacity of The Road Home, which enables us to fund more vital research to improve the lives of those who serve to protect us. I thank the THRF team for their commitment to The Road Home brand, providing us with the resource to grow and deliver more impact.

I would also like to acknowledge the very sad passing of Air-Vice Marshal Brent Espeland AM (Ret'd) our Chair. It was an honour to work with him and be guided by his vision and passion for improving veterans, emergency services and their families' health and wellbeing through research and our other programs. He will be sadly missed.



Karen May and Air-Vice Marshal Brent Espeland AM (Ret'd).

In the 2016/17 year we have been focused on developing our relationships and ties with our beneficiary groups of current and past serving veterans, the Australian Defence Force as an organisation, emergency service personnel and their organisations, as well as the partners and families of injured veterans. With a strong mental health focus we have also worked closely with partners such as the Mental Health Commission, to learn from their work, alongside other Ex-Service organisations and service providers. This helps us provide comprehensive research opportunities to inform treatment and services to support our heroes in need.

Our success has been possible thanks to your ongoing support and our strong Board of Governors, led by Air-Vice Marshal Brent Espeland AM (Ret'd) and current Acting Chair, Brigadier Alison Creagh CSC (Ret'd). We thank them for their inspiring dedication during a time of critical growth for our organisation.

This year, with your support we have provided funding for a number of world-first research projects. It is research that is essential to ensuring we deliver findings that inform our work into the field of veteran and first responder health and wellbeing. From research, we have learned that our service delivery model through our Wellbeing Program must focus on camaraderie and social connection. It's now been developed around art and art therapy, a healthy active lifestyle, mindfulness, resilience and pathways to recovery and growth to achieve life goals.

**Expanding our research opportunities we are very excited about new relationships we continue to forge, such as our partnership with the University of South Australia through the Invictus Pathways Program. This exciting program for veterans is supported by a three year PhD research project aimed at reinforcing with peer reviewed research the way programs such as the Invictus Games help veterans on their road home to recovery. We are pleased to fund this PhD with the support of THRF and we thank the University of South Australia for their involvement and commitment to this program.**



Image above: L-R Stephanie Morton OAM, Professor Roger Eston, Caitlin Ward and Stuart O'Grady OAM.

As our relationships with Emergency Services deepen, we are learning more about the needs of these groups and how we can add value from a research perspective. Some of this is new territory for these organisations and our own. Together, we are working on research to inform new processes to support mental health reform and best practice work health and safety to maintain the wellbeing in these workforces. This includes addressing any mental health stigma issues and promoting early intervention for injuries such as Post-Traumatic Stress. The aim is to utilise research to inform programs that help reduce suffering and to support veteran and emergency service retirement practices, which enable good health and wellbeing beyond a career of service.



Image above: The Jamie Larcombe Centre in Glenside. Photo credit: Veterans SA

Our involvement in the oversight process to develop appropriate models of care for the new Jamie Larcombe Centre in Glenside has been a very valuable opportunity for our organisation. We look forward to the positive outcomes when this new centre opens in October 2017 and our role in supporting a research centre which will for the first time in Australia be based alongside an acute mental health hospital facility. The addition of a partnerships hub on site will be a first for Australia and give us a platform to reinforce the value of world-class research underpinning services for mental health and the patients with service related trauma conditions.

Besides our involvement in these consultations and advocating for the needs of our beneficiary group, we have also been working to forge international relationships with research partners and organisations. This helps ensure we are continuing to provide world-class research and development in the areas of health and wellbeing therapies to inform better outcomes for veterans, emergency service personnel and families.

This year has also seen us host a number of fantastic events, joined by wonderful supporters from the community. We thank you for putting your faith in us to deliver what we set out to do in our mission: raising awareness and funds to support research and programs that deliver optimal models of care and health outcomes for Australia's veterans, emergency service personnel and their families.

Thank you.







# VALE AIR-VICE MARSHAL BRENT ESPELAND AM



The Road Home is deeply saddened by the passing of Air-Vice Marshal Brent Espeland AM (Ret'd), a distinguished figure in our Australian military who championed support for veterans both past and present.

With a career in the Royal Australian Air Force spanning 36 years, Air-Vice Marshal

Espeland dedicated his professional career to serving and protecting his country, and continued this through his retirement as The Road Home Chair of Board of Governors.

Living a distinguished career in the Australian Defence Force, Air-Vice Marshal Espeland was an experienced commander, holding unit and formation command twice. In testament to his leadership, he was appointed Air Officer Commanding Training Command and Deputy Chief of Air Force. His final appointment in the Australian Defence Force was on secondment to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet where he was responsible for the coordination of security and intelligence at the national level for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, an extraordinary career achievement.

Believing Australian citizens owe a profound debt of support to our servicemen and women, throughout his retirement Brent tirelessly advocated for the health and support of both past, present and future veterans. In addition to his involvement with The Road Home, he was the founding member of the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations where he was a spokesperson for veterans by working closely with the Australian government to invoke change.

His advocacy and support didn't end there. He was National President of the Australian Flying Corps and Royal Australian Air Force Association and both National and South Australian President of the Royal United Services Institute of Australia, a Director of the Sir Richard Williams Foundation, a member of the Department of Veterans Affairs Round Table, a member of the Air Force Heritage Advisory Committee and served as a member of the National Council of the Australian Air Force Cadets.

As The Road Home Chair of Board of Governors Air-Vice Marshal Espeland's leadership, unwavering passion and determination to protect Australia's servicemen and women has played an integral role in forming the foundations of The Road Home and what it stands for.

"Air-Vice Marshal Espeland's advocacy and fierce determination to fight for the support of servicemen and women and emergency service personnel continues to inspire all that we do at The Road Home," The Road Home Deputy Chair of Board of Governors Brigadier Alison Creagh CSC (Ret'd) said.

"He has left behind a legacy that will continue to shape The Road Home's direction as we support Australia's past and present veterans and emergency service personnel living with visible and invisible injuries of service. Brent would want us to continue this important work and we will continue to be encouraged and inspired by his commitment to serving Australia and the men and women who choose to serve Australia in the Australian Defence Force and emergency services.

"Our thoughts are with the family and friends of Air-Vice Marshal Espeland AM (Ret'd) during this time. Lest we forget."



Image top: Air-Vice Marshal Brent Espeland AM (Ret'd) and Judy Espeland.

Image above: L-R Paul Flynn, Karen May, Petula Columbus, Michelle Atchison and Air-Vice Marshal Brent Espeland AM (Ret'd).

# BEQUESTS

Thank you to the generous individuals who made the decision to leave a gift in their Will to The Road Home this year. For many people, giving their estate, or part of their estate, is an opportunity to give a significant contribution to an organisation they care about and respect.

A gift in your Will of any size is an effective way of providing a lasting legacy and we thank the following people for leaving a gift to enable The Repat Foundation – The Road Home to support research into the health and wellbeing of our nation's heroes in the 2016/17 year:

- Cyril Young
- Emil Savron
- Joan Skinner

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU

We would like to acknowledge and gratefully thank the individuals and organisations who have supported us and our mission in 2016/17. Your support is truly making a difference.

A special thanks goes to our major donors:

- Dr James Speirs
- Dr Scott Germann
- Mr Andrew Wauchope
- Mr Brian Herman
- Mr Eugene Dunstan
- Mr Francis Elliott
- Mr Frank Bettoney
- Mr Geoff & Mrs Mary Thomas
- Mr Gordon Edwards
- Mr Graham Brookman
- Mr Henry Blythe
- Mr Ian Johns
- Mr John Ellenton
- Mr John Webb
- Mr Michael Redmond
- Mr Murray Ness
- Mr Paul & Mrs Betty Franche
- Mr Peter Griffiths
- Mr Tyson Jeanes
- Mrs Anne Bond
- Mrs Athalie Phillis
- Mrs Colleen Fowler
- Mrs Helen Bowden
- Mrs Helen Dorsman
- Mrs Hilda Lundstrom
- Mrs Jean Matthews
- Mrs Tassanee O'Brien

- Ms Janette Muirs
- Ms Julie Pearson
- Ms Julie Wesley
- Sir Ron Brierley

A special thanks to our kind group of regular givers who gave automatic monthly donations during the 2016/17 year. Regular giving allows us to reduce our administration costs, supporting more research for the men and women who put themselves in harm's way to protect us. Thank you to the following people for your support in the 2016/17 year:

- Miss Rosemary MacKrell
- Mr Chee Tan
- Mr Douglas Magarey
- Mr Edward Gasson
- Mr Frank Seeley AM & Mrs Kathy Seeley
- Mr Fred Johnson
- Mr Geoffrey Leech
- Mr Grahame Booth
- Mr Grant McCracken
- Mr John Woodward
- Mr Michael Stanbridge
- Mr Murray Monteleone
- Mr Peter Cragen
- Mr Peter Turner
- Mrs Ellan Hyman
- Mrs Hazel Davis
- Mrs Joan Pounsett
- Mrs Joy Kelly
- Mrs June Godwin
- Mrs Lorraine Baillie
- Mrs Lorrie Martinovich
- Ms Barbra Meehan
- Ms Monica Schnieder OAM JP

In 2016/17, we were also so thankful to receive a number of grants to support our Wellbeing Program. Thank you to:

- Sisters of Charity \$9,900 for 'Hope and Healing Through Art'
- Government of South Australia, Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) \$5,000 for 'Art Therapy as a Healing Approach'
- The Marian & E.H. Flack Trust \$10,000 for 'Artist in Residence Ward 17'
- RSL Care SA \$10,000 for 'The Road Home Pilot Program – RSL Care SA Vietnam Veterans & Andrew Russell Veteran living Program'

We were also kindly supported by the corporate community, with the Asian Women's Consultative Council providing \$1,500 for art materials, helping to boost our art program.





With your generous support, we are improving the health and wellbeing of veterans, emergency service personnel and their families across Australia.







# BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Repat Foundation - The Road Home's Board of Governors in 2016/17 have guided us through an exciting period of growth.

- Chair: Air-Vice Marshal Brent Espeland AM (Deceased)
- Deputy Chair: Brigadier Alison Creagh CSC (Ret'd)
- Mr Christian Hamilton
- Mr Andrew Mannix
- Dr Samantha Cromptvoets
- Mr John Godwin
- Ms Nina Craven
- Commissioner Greg Mullins AFSM (Ret'd)
- Mr Paul Flynn
- Ms Karen May (Ex officio)
- Ms Fiona Smithson

A special thank you to the people that represented our organisation throughout the year, supporting our mission to protect the health and wellbeing of our nation's heroes and their families.

## Patrons

- His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC
- Mr Graham Cornes OAM

## Ambassadors

- Dr Gill Hicks, MBE FRSA
- Major General John Cantwell (Ret'd) AO DSC
- Stuart O'Grady OAM
- Stephanie Morton OAM
- Caitlin Ward

## Champions

- Chris Jenner
- Ron Read
- Bob and Sharyn Walter





# FINANCIALS

## Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the Year Ended 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Revenue from operating and non operating activities	1,051,330	556,536
Lottery expenses	-	(24,125)
Fundraising expenses	(123,674)	(101,667)
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>927,656</b>	<b>430,744</b>
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(5,583)	(3,158)
Employee expenses	(178,120)	(191,508)
Business Administration	(41,133)	(46,682)
<b>Net profit before funding payments</b>	<b>702,820</b>	<b>189,396</b>
Funds paid to research and patient care	(653,858)	(190,594)
<b>Surplus/(loss) for the year</b>	<b>48,962</b>	<b>(1,198)</b>
Other comprehensive income	11,872	(3,134)
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>60,834</b>	<b>(4,332)</b>

## Statement of Financial Position As At 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	641,878	230,725
Trade and other receivables	88,211	29,875
Other current assets	10,393	2,481
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>740,482</b>	<b>263,081</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Financial assets	423,367	401,813
Property, plant and equipment	37,700	822
Intangibles (Websites)	3,597	7,913
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>	<b>464,664</b>	<b>410,548</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,205,146</b>	<b>673,629</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade and other payables	698,327	228,735
Short term provision	7,748	6,657
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>706,075</b>	<b>235,392</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>706,075</b>	<b>235,392</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>499,071</b>	<b>438,237</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Accumulated surplus	429,516	380,554
Financial asset reserve	69,555	57,683
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>499,071</b>	<b>438,237</b>

## Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Receipts from customers and clients	331,700	642,531
Grant receipts	670,353	-
Payments to suppliers and employees	(407,127)	(487,120)
Grants paid	(144,017)	-
Interest received	6,326	190
Investment Income	11,337	18,794
Interest and bank charges	(9,589)	(8,694)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>458,983</b>	<b>165,701</b>
<b>CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Payment for intangible assets	-	(10,790)
Proceeds from sale of (payments for) investments (net)	(9,684)	(12,536)
Payment for plant & equipment	(38,146)	-
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities</b>	<b>(47,830)</b>	<b>(23,326)</b>
<b>CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	411,153	142,375
Cash at the beginning of the year	230,725	88,350
<b>Cash at the end of the year</b>	<b>641,875</b>	<b>230,725</b>







# RESEARCH AND PROGRAMS TO PROTECT OUR HEROES

## Research

Early in 2017, The Road Home announced its successful recipients of the 2017 Research Grant Round for projects into the health and wellbeing of veterans, emergency service personnel and their families.



*Professor Sharon Lawn* from Flinders University is the successful recipient of Prabha Seshadri Grant for \$60,000, for her project titled: Living vicariously with PTSD: how partners experience and can better support those who are exposed to traumatic events in the course of their work.



*Dr Amy Baker* from the University of South Australia is one of the successful recipients of a 2017 Grant of \$50,000 for her one year project titled: Help-seeking for mental health concerns by emergency service first responders.



*Dr Leanne Glenny* from the University of South Australia is the second successful recipient of a 2017 Grant of \$50,000 for the one year project titled: Empowerment through language: Achieving positive health outcomes for trauma affected veterans and first responders.

The research we have been able to fund through The Road Home is a vital part of understanding the incidence, the causes and the best treatment models for our wounded veterans and servicemen and women to ensure we start to tackle suicide rates and improve health outcomes for those who serve our community.

## Programs

Expanding on its art program for veterans, in 2016/17, The Road Home officially launched its Wellbeing Program, a framework for delivery of wellbeing services to our veterans and emergency service personnel in need, as well as their families.

The program supports servicemen and women and their families' transition from service and/or injury to the next stage of life through a peer support community and wellbeing activities including art and art therapy.

The program will provide pathways for training, employment and meaningful volunteering options, referrals to appropriate health and care agencies for injuries, adjunct therapies (including art and art therapy) rehabilitation and recovery programs, community engagement and life skills to support wellbeing.

As part of this, The Road Home also launched its Invictus Pathways Program, in collaboration with the University of South Australia. We are the first in Australia to have a program specifically designed to provide support and tailored facilities needed for wounded veterans who are aspiring to compete in the Invictus Games. The Invictus Pathways Program provides struggling veterans with something to work towards and a purpose to give them direction, aid in their mental health and encourage them to be active and participate within society.



*Image above: L-R Darren O'Grady, Brendan Hardman, Mark Reidy, Stephanie Morton OAM, Emily Young, Peter Krause, Stuart O'Grady OAM and Caitlin Ward.*



Image: Veteran David Gillard uses art therapy as an outlet for his Post-Traumatic Stress.







*Image: L-R Chris Jenner, The Road Home  
Patron Graham Cornes OAM and Lorin  
Jenner.*



# 2016/17 EVENTS

This year was a fantastic year of events to help improve the health and wellbeing of our veterans, emergency service personnel and their families. Thank you to everyone who attended and supported us. This year's events included:

- Australasian Services Care Network Tri-Nations Symposium: 4th – 6th October 2016
- Remembrance Business Breakfast: Wednesday 9th November 2016, Adelaide Convention Centre
- Veteran's Mental Health Precinct Presentation: Wednesday 9th November 2016, Glenside Health Services
- Tour deFence: Sunday 13th November 2016, Torrens Parade Grounds
- Anzac Commemorative Cocktail Evening: Friday 21st April 2017, The Hilton
- Donor Thank You Morning Tea: Thursday 22nd June 2017, Torrens Parade Ground

## Partners

Thank to our key corporate partner throughout the 2016/17 year Flinders University and the University of South Australia.

Thank you to Defence Housing Australia for providing \$20,000 for our Wellbeing Program vehicle.

## Sponsors

### GOLD Sponsors

- Flinders University
- Device Technologies
- Defence Teaming Centre

### BRONZE Sponsors

- Defence SA
- Defence Health
- ASC
- Nova Group



# SHOOTING HOOPS ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

**“When I left the military there was a massive gap in my life and I didn’t have anything to fill that...”**

Brendan Hardman’s life stopped when he had to suddenly leave the Australian Army after seven years of active service, forced to return home in April 2016 after a severe back and knee injury. Brendan had no choice but to take 12 months off from all forms of work to recover from his injuries. The dramatic change in his life and his lack of mobility left him severely depressed and living day to day with anxiety.

With his life unexpectedly changing at such a rapid pace, Brendan, who was used to being very active, was faced with operations and constant daily appointments with physiotherapists and doctors.

“The first four months after my discharge was filled nonstop with appointments, which took a major toll on me. It reinforced negative feelings as I was always focusing on my injuries, my pain and what I was no longer able to physically do,” Brendan said.

Brendan found light at the end of his dark tunnel when he joined The Road Home’s Wellbeing Program and its Invictus Pathways Program, allowing him to set his sights for the 2018 Sydney Invictus Games in wheelchair basketball.

**“Leaving the Army injured was extremely difficult for me as I lost a sense of purpose and my life suddenly stopped. Thanks to The Road Home, I am able to prove to myself that I can still set goals and continue to live my life despite my injuries,” Brendan said.**

Since beginning his training, Brendan can already feel his mental wellbeing improving on a daily basis and so can his loving wife who has been there every step of the way.

“My wife is an incredible person who has been there for me in my darkest days. The amount we have been through has definitely made our relationship stronger. It has been very tough on her as my mental health directly affects her and she is left to pick up the pieces,” Brendan said.

“Since I began participating in the Wellbeing Program and training for the Invictus Games, she has seen a huge change with my mental health which has been really positive. She is very supportive and is glad I’m out and about doing things again.

“The Road Home has given me the opportunity to speak about my journey at a number of events which has helped

me regain confidence in myself again and be proud of the journey I have been through.”

Having the opportunity to set his sights on competing in wheelchair basketball, Brendan has been engaged and motivated each week which is creating a positive pathway for his mental wellbeing.

“Being able to train in wheelchair basketball is what keeps me coming back each week and to receive that next level mentorship keeps me motivated and on track with my mental wellbeing,” Brendan said.

**“Making the Invictus Games next year would be fantastic. It’s about achieving goals I set myself and all I wanted from this Wellbeing Program is to prove to myself that I can still do things and set myself goals and be motivated to achieve them.”**



Image above: L-R Max Nelson (UniSA) with Brendan Hardman and Christian Cirocco (UniSA).





The Invictus  
Pathways  
Program is the  
first of its kind  
in Australia.

Image L-R Clockwise: Emily Young, Christian Cirocco,  
Mark Reidy, Peter Krause, Caitlin Ward, Stephanie  
Morton OAM, SA Mental Health Commissioner Chris  
Burns CSC and Brendan Hardman.



Image: South Australian Police Major Crash  
Brevet Sergeant Paul Zilm.





# OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS OF HELP-SEEKING FOR OUR EMERGENCY SERVICE PERSONNEL

New research aiming to break down the barriers emergency service personnel face when seeking help for mental health conditions is now underway thanks to your support of our recent grant recipient, Dr Amy Baker, a specialist researcher in the field of mental health.

The Road Home is proud to be funding Dr Baker and her team, including Professor Nicholas Procter, Chair: Mental Health Nursing at the University of South Australia, leader of the Mental Health and Substance Use Research Group, Sansom Institute for Health Research.

This project focuses on emergency service personnel who have been exposed to traumatic incidents and can identify health concerns related to their work as first responders. Unfortunately, there are barriers yet to be understood as to why emergency service personnel are not seeking help.

**“Through this grant we hope to better understand the barriers and enablers for help-seeking. If we can understand these then hopefully we will be able to develop strategies that are practical, meaningful and more sustainable in the long term to help,” Dr Baker said.**



*Image above: Dr Baker with SA Mental Health Commissioner Chris Burns CSC.*

There will be two phases of this project. In the first phase, Dr Baker is hoping to speak with at least 15 emergency service personnel, to better understand barriers and enablers for help-seeking from their perspective.

**“We will be conducting one to one interviews and using an approach called participatory action research. This research approach emphasises the participation of emergency service personnel – those whose lives are most affected by the issue,” Dr Baker said.**

**“The second phase is to work closely with emergency service personnel to design and trial some strategies that will hopefully address barriers to help-seeking that were identified in the first phase.**

**“We recognise there is increased risk of mental health concerns for first responders but there needs to be a lot more research into what the barriers are to seeking help and the things that enable help seeking.**



**“This research project is a very practical one. It addresses a real-world concern in our community right now. I am grateful to be given this opportunity through this grant to help those who may be suffering in silence. Hopefully this research will lead to strategies which assist people to seek help earlier and in doing so, avoid mental health distress and enjoy better mental health.”**

# LIVING WITH A SILENT ENEMY FOR OVER 40 YEARS

Vietnam veteran David Lynch's world came crashing down when he was diagnosed with delayed-onset Post-Traumatic Stress. Thanks to The Road Home's art therapy program, he has found hope at a second chance at life. With your continuous support, we can give people like David the same hope that they can overcome this silent injury.

Having spent two years in the Australian Defence Force, one year training and the second in Vietnam, David explained there was no debrief or communication on how to manage or deal with the effects of the trauma he would experience and live through each day.

Upon his return from war, like many others, David refused to discuss anything related to his time in Vietnam. He tried to block it from his memory like it never happened – until he found himself facing the greatest challenge of his life. David suffered a major and debilitating mental breakdown in early 2016 where he was then admitted to Ward 17 at the Repatriation General Hospital.

"The world as I knew it collapsed around me. It deeply impacted my wife and family and I was unable to face going to work. I had spent years battling with this silent injury, knowing that something was wrong but I spent my life hiding behind a false façade of 'I'm okay'," David said.

**"It had taken 46 years of suppressing this silent enemy living deep within before it finally erupted and the damage exposed."**



*Image above: David is a strong advocate for art therapy and believes the program helps those suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress.*

Thanks to the support of The Road Home, David has found hope through art therapy and is a strong believer the program helps veterans suffering Post-Traumatic Stress.

He is an advocate for art therapy and is grateful it has given him the opportunity to take control of his life again.

**"I believe art therapy provides a strong platform for veterans suffering from this silent injury. To visualise and create by drawing your thoughts, feelings and emotions is an alternative and powerful way of expressing yourself," David explained.**

"I find art therapy a time to reflect and demonstrate my true feelings and thoughts. I am very grateful that I have found a medium that allows myself to be open to self-discovery without fear of embarrassment or hiding my true thoughts and feelings, frightening as it may be. I have surprised myself with the final outcome; it has been a raw but honest and positive experience."

It is thanks to your support that veterans like David can get a second chance at life. It is programs such as art therapy that can really impact not only veterans but emergency service personnel, giving them hope they so desperately need.

**"I am now looking forward to living my life with my new skills. I have learnt to take control of my Post-Traumatic Stress, in place of it controlling me. It is not an easy road but with the help of The Repat Foundation – The Road Home I hope to live the remainder of my life as a better person."**



Image: Vietnam veteran David Lynch uses art as an outlet for his Post-Traumatic Stress.





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