



Celebrating
30 YEARS
of leading the
revolution in youth
mental health

Annual report
2022-2023

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Orygen acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands we are on and pays respect to their Elders past and present. Orygen recognises and respects their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationships to Country, which continue to be important to the First Nations people living today.

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CONTENTS

Chairman's message	4
Executive Director's message	6
First Nations	8
Recognising our people	10

13

LEADING THE REVOLUTION IN YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Orygen's 30 th anniversary	14
The evolution of Orygen	15
How we celebrated	17
Looking ahead	18

21

YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO

National Youth Participation team	22
Youth participation across Orygen	23

31

CLINICAL CARE

headspace continues to deliver for north-west communities	32
Trans and Gender Diverse Service embedded in five headspace centres	32
A focus on lived experience	33
Care and training streamlined in Orygen-VU partnership	33
Transformation	34
Specialist clinical care	34

37**RESEARCH AND
TRANSLATION**

Research highlights	40
Knowledge Translation	48

55**EDUCATION
AND TRAINING**

Orygen becomes a Registered Training Organisation	56
Graduate education	57
2022-23 Toolkits and Guidelines	58

61**ADVOCACY
AND POLICY**

The Orygen Institute	62
Government relations	64

67**DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION**

MOST marks milestone	68
Orygen Digital receives a Wellcome investment	69
Mello launches with impressive trial results	69
YOTES Berry Street launch	70

A revolution in the way we work	72
A big thank you	73
Our corporate and community partners	75
Our leaders	79
Financial statements	80
Publications	82

Chairman's message



It has been an absolute privilege for me, in my first year as Chairman, to be involved with the incredible people who are part of the team at Orygen. Not only because of the importance of Orygen's mission and work to support young people, but also because of Orygen's leading role, both nationally and around the world, as a change agent.

Orygen is one of the most successful medical research innovation change stories ever to come out of Australia. For more than 30 years, Orygen has worked side-by-side with young people to transform youth mental health and this work has led to the creation of a revolutionary new field of medicine.

Orygen is unique because in the pursuit of our vision, we bring together all of the elements that are needed to drive optimal mental health for young people. We bring together some of the world's best talent from many disciplines: research, advocacy, education and care. Every Orygen employee has played an important role in shaping not only the organisation, but also in delivering better youth mental health services that are delivering better outcomes for young people and their families. We have so much to be proud of, as Orygen continues to lead the way in all areas of youth mental health research, advocacy and care.

As we look to the future I would also like to reflect on the achievements of my predecessor Alan Beanland. First as an Orygen Board member for three years, then for a further five years as Chairman, in which Alan oversaw the expansion of Orygen's services and reach, including moving into our state-of-the-art Parkville building; innovative developments in research, exemplified by record high international grant awards and digital solutions; the strengthening of the Board, governance and clinical structures; the establishment of the Orygen Foundation; and reaching an agreement to transfer additional inpatient services to Orygen in the future. I thank Alan for his exemplary service to Orygen and the young people we work with.

What motivates me and my fellow Board members is the pride we have in being a part of a values and purpose-driven organisation, where everyone works in partnership to ensure young people experience optimum mental health and wellbeing. It's a very real and present mission for all Orygen people.

As we celebrate the 30-year anniversary of Orygen there are too many people to thank or call out individually, but I do want to pay tribute to Professor Pat McGorry, the Executive Director of Orygen. It is Pat's vision and determination which has led this organisation from its inception through 30 years of growth. Working with Pat, the team at Orygen has overseen a myriad of achievements and numerous changes to the system and service landscape, both in Australia and abroad.

Looking to the future, our strategic priorities are structured around five areas: clinical care, research and innovation, education and translation, advocacy and policy, and digital transformation. By focusing on these areas of importance, we enter the next phase of Orygen's evolution, and look ahead to the next 30 years of this great organisation.



Sir Edward Byrne AC Kt
Chairman



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We have so much to be proud of, as Orygen continues to lead the way in all areas of youth mental health research, advocacy and care.

Executive Director's message



The 2022-23 year saw many exciting developments at Orygen. There were landmark days of celebration and reflection, combined with new milestones of steady progress and reinvention which are setting in motion a brighter and more cohesive future for the entire organisation.

Orygen celebrated 30 years of leading the revolution in youth mental health, and I felt proud of the huge team effort that has built a new field of youth mental health here in Victoria and around the world, and a strong epicentre at Orygen which is inspiring and collaborating in this overdue reform. This is a shared achievement involving thousands of committed and creative people over so many years. However, we still have a long way to go, and we must continue to reimagine our mission and draw in more resources and new generations of talent and support.

Marking Orygen's 30-year anniversary provided a great morale boost as we navigate a new era of reform and the challenges of change. The assembly and spread of the youth mental health paradigm, the growth of a youth mental health workforce, and the creation of an evidence base, along with optimism and hope to the treatment of young people have only been possible through the dedication and commitment of the teams within our ecosystem at Orygen.

Some veterans have been with us since the earliest days of the Early Psychosis Prevention and Intervention Centre (EPPIC) and even before that at Royal Park Hospital. Others have worked alongside these original team members, some for over 20 years, to help us build and grow the organisation, as they themselves grew into Orygen leaders.

With this wealth of vision, energy and experience – reinforced by new generations of clinicians, researchers and most importantly by young people and their families – we are all continuing to breathe life into and build the field of youth mental health. My heartfelt thanks and congratulations to everyone who has been a part of the history of Orygen and its impact in providing new cultures of care to young people.

I would like to also recognise the sustained contributions and support from the University of Melbourne, Melbourne Health and the Colonial Foundation. The long-term vision and commitment of the Colonial Foundation has been catalytic and helped sustain the exponential success of Orygen over the past 20 years. The youth mental health field in Australia and around the world is indebted to Colonial and its custodians over this extended period. We also thank our many state and federal government, philanthropic, and business funding partners who help make our vital work possible.

Though his retirement came just after the 2022–23 financial year, I would like to extend my thanks to the former Premier of Victoria, the Hon. Daniel Andrews MP, whose constant support was invaluable to Orygen over many years, and also to the former Victorian Health Minister Martin Foley MP, who has been a long-term source of support and advice. The new Premier of Victoria, the Hon. Jacinta Allan MP, has also personally supported us throughout the years and it was a huge honour and boost to morale that she joined us in person for our 30th anniversary celebration.

We are also grateful to many other key government partners across Australia, including Federal Health Minister, the Hon. Mark Butler MP, Assistant Minister the Hon. Emma McBride MP, and also former Federal Health Minister, the Hon. Greg Hunt MP. We have been very fortunate to always have been able to count on bipartisan support for our mission and all recent prime ministers have been directly engaged around youth mental health and Orygen's work. We thank you all for enabling us to continually grow our impact across research, workforce development and service reforms. We look forward to continuing to work with all our fellow "revolutionaries" to ensure all young people

have access to the care they need, when, where and how they need it, supporting them to recover and thrive as they grow into adulthood. Revolutions must be constant to succeed. Our track record of serial reinvention demonstrates this truism.

In closing, I would like to thank our former Chairman Alan Beanland for his eight years of service on our Board with five years as Chair. Alan's dedication and skill navigated a series of pivots and challenges including the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System and the pandemic. His tenure witnessed significant benefits for young people both here in Australia and beyond. I also thank our new Chairman, Professor Sir Edward Byrne AC Kt, who has in his first year of leadership has helped us define our 2027 strategic priorities which have created an ambitious plan for Orygen and the team to continue on its journey in revolutionising youth mental health care for young people. We are very fortunate indeed to have had the gift of Professor Byrne's wisdom and experience in this period of transition and integration.

I thank the entire Board, and particularly my extraordinarily talented and dedicated Executive Leadership Team for their resilience and skill during a challenging but important period of opportunity. In addition, I want to especially thank every single Orygen staff member for their dedication, grit and energy over the past 12 months. Finally, I thank the young people and families whose expertise, insights and ideas have been integral to shaping Orygen's work and broader mission, not just over the past year, but past three decades. I look forward to working alongside all of you in Orygen's next phase of growth and continued success.



Professor Patrick McGorry AO
Executive Director





First Nations

The First Nations Team continued to support the organisation in the delivery of the strategic priorities of the Cultural Strengthening Plan, including activities that raised awareness, increased cultural safety, provided cultural liaison, and further developed internal and external partnerships.



Awareness and cultural strengthening

Orygen has supported cultural awareness training for all staff through:

- the implementation of mandatory online training for all staff in early 2022 and a longer online training module in early 2023, both through OurMob;
- tailored face-to-face training on Acknowledgements of Country across 2022-23, through Acknowledge This;
- specialised and tailored face-to-face cultural awareness training through girrawayanyi.com.au both for all Orygen staff (including the Executive Leadership team) and the Orygen Board; and,
- providing cultural guidance and support in the creation of new Identified positions across headspace sites (youth peer workers), the Orygen Specialist Program and the broader organisation.

Partnerships

The First Nations Team has developed key internal partnerships, with positive outcomes. These include, but are not limited to:

- Orygen Digital, and supporting the team to ask Identifying Questions, as part of the MOST platform rollout;
- Orygen Registered Training Organisation (RTO), including providing cultural guidance on appropriate training materials to Promote Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety, as part of the Certificate IV in Peer Work;
- recruitment of internal staff to partake in First Nations research projects; and,
- consulting with Research and Translation on appropriate cultural language use and connecting these teams with the appropriate networks.

The First Nations team was part of a VicHealth research project that included The University of Melbourne, South Australian Medical Health Research Institute, Rumbalara Aboriginal Football Netball Club and the Kaiela Institute. Orygen had two researchers involved in the project assisting with data analysis. This brought these researchers to Community and positively impacted on their knowledge of conducting culturally safe research. The project aimed to understand the impacts of racism on young people's mental health.

Orygen's First Nations Team joined with the Research and Translation team to support a partnership with St Kilda Football Club former player and community leader, Nathan Lovett-Murray to provide an evaluation of the Point & Be Proud school project. Point & Be Proud is a schools-based educational program targeted towards young people and focusses on building awareness of the ongoing mental health impacts that can derive from racism, discrimination and bullying.

Youth participation

As part of the recruitment of the new Orygen National Youth Advisory Council, the First Nations Team worked in collaboration with the Youth Participation Team to ensure the position descriptions were culturally appropriate. As a result of this collaboration, two First Nations candidates were appointed to the National Youth Advisory Council.

Recognising our people

We're proud of the Orygen people and teams who received awards and recognition for their professional achievements during 2022-23.

2021 MJA award for Excellence in Medical Research

In July, research conducted at Orygen received the 2021 Medical Journal of Australia (MJA) award for Excellence in Medical Research. The award honours the authors of the best original clinical research article published in MJA each calendar year.

The study, *Suicide by young Australians, 2006-2015: a cross-sectional analysis of national coronial data*, found that mental ill-health was a major contributor to Australian youth suicide.

The research revealed that most young Australians who died by suicide between 2006 and 2015 had either a diagnosed or a likely mental health disorder, yet more than two-thirds were not in contact with mental health services at the time of their deaths. The study was authored by Dr Nicole Hill, Dr Katrina Witt, Ms Gowri Rajaram, Professor Patrick McGorry and Professor Jo Robinson.



Professor Alvarez-Jimenez receives his award at the MHS Learning Network awards ceremony in October.

The 2022 Diana Award

Maddison O’Gradey-Lee, Orygen Global’s youth mental health advocacy fellowship co-founder and advisor, was recognised in July for her work in youth mental health by receiving the 2022 Diana Award.

Established in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, the prestigious Diana Award recognises a young person aged 9-25 years for their social action or humanitarian work. Recipients must have demonstrated an ability to inspire and mobilise new generations to serve their communities and create long-lasting change on a global scale.

Brain & Behavior Research Foundation 2022 Young Investigator

In 2022, Clinical Neuroscience Research Fellow Dr Ilvana Dzafic received a NARSAD Young Investigator Grant from the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation, the largest non-government, psychiatric brain and behaviour disorder research organisation in the USA.

Dr Dzafic’s research project, measuring glutamate alterations in the hope of predicting who is at risk to develop a psychotic disorder, was selected by a panel of 177 world-renowned scientists with expertise in every area of brain research. The project will test whether using EEG, which measures brain waves that are known to be related to glutamate, can help predict the risk of developing a psychotic disorder.

2022 Tom Trauer Evaluation and Research Award

Orygen Digital’s Professor Mario Alvarez-Jimenez was awarded the 2022 Tom Trauer Evaluation and Research Award by The MHS Learning Network. Professor Alvarez-Jimenez was recognised for his work, *Harnessing Digital Technology to Transform Youth Mental Health Services*.

RANZCP 2023 Ian Simpson Award

Orygen Chief of Clinical Practice Professor Andrew Chanen received The Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Psychiatrists Ian Simpson Award for 2023. The award acknowledges Professor Chanen’s groundbreaking work in developing services for young people with borderline personality disorder and his research in the area.

Professor Chanen said it was a special honour to be recognised by his peers. “I am very grateful to have worked with an exceptional team of clinicians, researchers, and supporting staff, and to have learned so much from thousands of young people and families,” he said. As the award recipient, Professor Chanen gave a keynote presentation at the RANZCP Annual Congress in May, 2023.

2023 King’s Birthday Honours

In June, Orygen Head of Suicide Research, Professor Jo Robinson was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) as part of the King’s Birthday honours. Professor Robinson received the honour in recognition of “significant service to community health through suicide prevention awareness and support”.





**LEADING THE
REVOLUTION
IN YOUTH
MENTAL HEALTH**

Orygen's 30th anniversary

Over the past 30 years, Orygen has been working side-by-side with young people to revolutionise youth mental health.

With the help of countless dedicated supporters and staff, Orygen has grown to be a world leader in youth mental health care, research and training. None of this would have been possible without the support of the young people Orygen works with, or their supporters and communities.

Our workforce has the largest concentration of youth mental health researchers, clinicians and educators in the world, all focussed on integrating cutting-edge global research, policy and education with evidence-based clinical care.

Over the past three decades Orygen has built relationships with more than 500 organisations in over 50 countries across six continents, with Orygen's global partnerships spanning research, workforce and clinical service development, education, training and advocacy.

Our 30th anniversary celebrations provided the opportunity to both reflect on the youth mental health revolution we have helped to create while also looking ahead to the future as we continue our innovative work to give young people hope for their own positive futures.



Friends, families and supporters from the past and present gathered at our Parkville home to celebrate Orygen's 30th anniversary of revolutionising youth mental health.

The evolution of Orygen

Thirty years ago, the landscape of youth mental health care was very different to what it is today.

It was a time when mental illness was often treated as if it was a terminal disease and early intervention was applied only to physical illnesses.

Orygen Executive Director Patrick McGorry said often people as young as 15 were placed into adult mental hospitals.

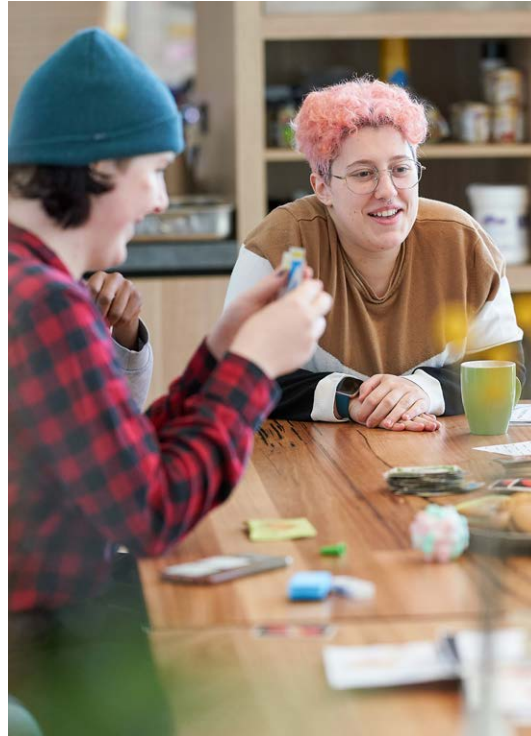
“They were brought into this 19th century asylum sort of environment, which was very frightening and traumatising,” he said.

“We decided to try and turn this around, to challenge the idea that people couldn’t get better. Hope is necessary in treating any kind of disorder. That wasn’t recognised in psychiatry and certainly wasn’t practised.”

EPPIC

In 1992 the Early Psychosis Prevention and Intervention Centre was established, revolutionising early psychosis treatment by humanising inpatient care and pioneering an early intervention approach involving families and carers as key pillars of recovery.

In 2002, the centre was renamed Orygen, and in 2013 the EPPIC model was rolled out nationally. It has become the template on which many specialist early psychosis services worldwide are now designed.



Advancements in clinical care

Orygen led the creation of primary care platform headspace – the first point of contact for young people experiencing mental ill-health and a one-stop-shop for physical health, alcohol and other drugs, work and study support.

There are now more than 120 headspace centres in Australia. Orygen also runs five centres across Melbourne’s north-west and west in Craigieburn, Glenroy, Melton, Sunshine and Werribee.

Providing services for young people with more complex needs, Orygen operates the specialist care program run by the Royal Melbourne Hospital, including:

- an inpatient unit;
- the Orygen at Home program;
- the Hospital Outreach Post-Emergency (HOPE) presentation program; and
- forensic youth mental health services.

Orygen also operates and runs Orygen Recovery, a 20-bed Youth Prevention and Recovery Care (YPARC) service which opened in July 2022.



Harnessing technology to support mental wellbeing

Orygen Digital is utilising technology's potential and enhancing clinical care for young people.

With a remit to bring the best of digital technology and clinical research to treatment options, our MOST service and virtual reality (VR) lab recognise that young people are digital natives at ease with technology, so they need access to mental health support on their terms.

Starting as a research project more than 12 years ago, MOST has evolved into an on-demand digital therapy service offering self-directed therapy content, safe moderated online community discussions, and access to peer workers, career counselling and one-on-one clinical support.

The latest evolution of MOST launched in Victoria in mid-2020. It now supports thousands of young people nationally and internationally.



Research with impact

Orygen's research has always focussed on redefining what's possible in global youth mental health research.

Today, Orygen is home to the world's largest concentration of youth mental health researchers, clinicians and educators, all focussed on integrating global research, policy and education with evidence-based clinical care.

Over the past 30 years, major areas of research impact have included:

- developing the early intervention approach for treating psychosis and identifying that it is possible to reduce the risk of developing psychosis among people who are showing signs of the disorder. This approach has revolutionised research and clinical practice and is now applied worldwide across a range of mental disorders;
- showing that vocational interventions can significantly improve work outcomes in young people with mental illnesses, particularly the Individual Placement and Support approach;
- developing the clinical staging model for diagnosing mental illness. The model helps clinicians improve their selection or sequencing of treatments and enables them to make more accurate statements regarding people's prognosis;
- developing early intervention for severe personality disorder, which has been implemented internationally. This demonstrates that early detection and treatment are embraced by young people, improving their relationships and daily functioning, and reducing self-harm and suicide attempts;
- showing that psychological therapies are the best initial treatment for young people with depression; and
- the suicide prevention research program, which has developed a youth-focused model of suicide prevention that builds upon existing partnerships and on pilot data obtained from work previously conducted by Orygen.

How we celebrated

Friends, families and supporters from the past and present gathered at our Parkville home to celebrate Orygen's 30th anniversary of revolutionising youth mental health.

Premier of Victoria, Hon. Jacinta Allan MP and Minister for Mental Health, Hon. Ingrid Stitt MP, were among over 400 guests including young people, families, current and former staff, volunteers and other valued partners.

The event, MC'd by 7News journalist Melina Sarris, included speeches from Orygen Youth Advisory Council member Mariah Amjad, Orygen Board Chair Professor Sir Edward Byrne, Premier Allan and Orygen Executive Director Professor Patrick McGorry.

A plaque was also unveiled by Premier Allan to commemorate Orygen's 30 years.

All of the speakers spoke of the positive impact Orygen has had both nationally and globally improving the lives of young people and the vital importance of continuing the revolution in youth mental health that Orygen has championed.

Premier Allan explained that over the past three decades, Orygen has lived up to its mantra of revolutionising youth mental health and ensuring that children and young people are not only supported, but supported to flourish.

"Orygen has translated knowledge and skills into a better mental healthcare system for children and young people around the world," she said.

Orygen Youth Advisory Council member, Mariah said it would be remiss of her if she didn't mention Orygen's intentional effort to continuously centre young people at the heart of its work through collaboration and advocacy.

"In the relatively short time that I've been here, I've seen opportunities for young people to assist in designing research studies, organising conferences, and being given a platform to speak out on mental health issues in the media. It's clear that Orygen prioritises the involvement of young people in the places that concern them," she said.

The celebration was an opportunity to acknowledge Orygen's past achievements, but it also highlighted the ongoing challenges that persist in the field of youth mental health. Despite the significant progress made, youth mental health remains a pressing issue in Australia and around the world.

In partnership with young people, a robust and pioneering research program, and in collaboration with national and international partners, Orygen is determined to continue translating knowledge and innovation into tangible care and support for young people everywhere.



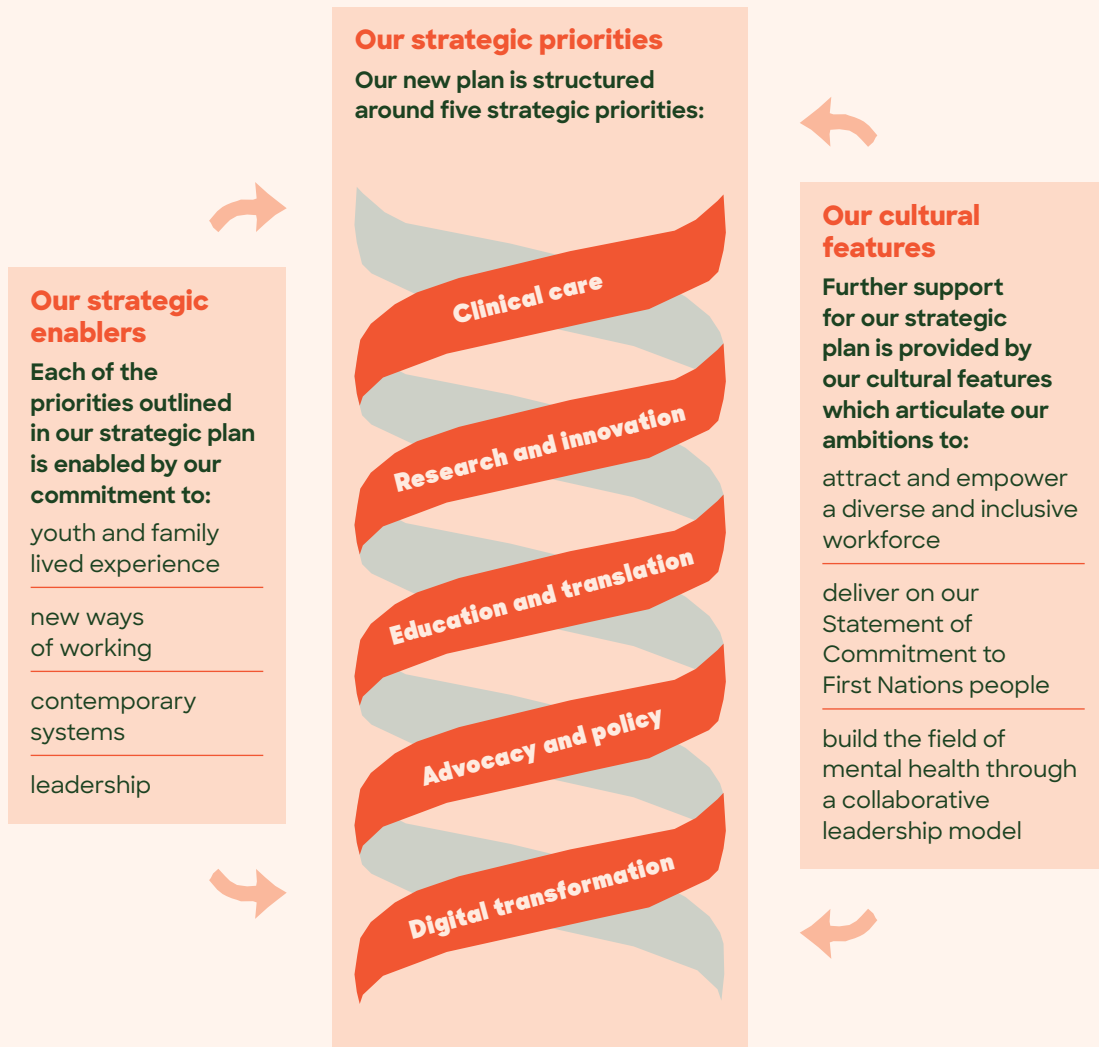
Professor Patrick McGorry, Mariah Amjad, Premier Jacinta Allan and Orygen Board Chair Professor Sir Ed Byrne with the commemorative plaque.

Looking ahead

Our strategic priorities 2022-2027

Over the last 30 years, our strategic plans have guided our endeavours and helped us measure our progress. The outcomes of these plans have included headspace, Orygen Digital, our purpose-built facility at Parkville, and the mandate for youth mental health reform realised through the Victorian Royal Commission.

Our new strategic plan considers our journey over the next five years. Its immediate context is the authorising environment of the Royal Commission, which empowers us to integrate everything we do under one governance roof. This is a unique opportunity to create a visible demonstration of optimal youth mental health care.



This strategic plan will help us secure our role as the wellspring and epicentre of a global collaborative movement to build the field of youth mental health. We will re-imagine and lead the way in which clinical care is provided, making sure young people are supported to achieve their full potential.





**YOUNG PEOPLE
AT THE HEART
OF EVERYTHING
WE DO**

One of Orygen's priorities is to meaningfully involve young people in its work - this includes decision-making at different levels of the organisation, designing programs and practice models, setting Orygen's research agenda and driving advocacy.

National Youth Participation team

The National Youth Participation Team's role is to develop, implement and foster youth participation practices across Orygen that benefit young people and, in turn, their families and communities. Capacity building of Orygen's workforce was a large part of the Youth Participation Team's output across the financial year.

The team's main focus for 2022-23 has been to strengthen the strategic role of the National Youth Advisory groups, build the new team's connections across the organisation and evolve existing structures to support young people to participate in decision-making across more parts of Orygen's work.

In addition, the National Youth Participation team also:

- supported a delegation of six young people who attended the International Association for Youth Mental Health (IAYMH) in Copenhagen, Denmark in September; and,
- supported these IAYMH attendees to plan and facilitate an Orygen event in December, showcasing IAYMH papers for staff who were unable to attend the Denmark conference.

A key achievement during this time has been working with Orygen's Executive and Board to appoint young people to Orygen's governance structures. The proposal to appoint young people to Orygen's Board and several Board subcommittees was endorsed in 2022-23, paving the way for the appointment of between six and 12 young people in 2023-24.

Central to the team's role within Orygen is linking young people to more opportunities across the organisation and assisting staff to incorporate youth participation in a broader range of activities. In the past year, the team:

- delivered nine New Staff Connect sessions on youth participation to new starters at Orygen;
- delivered nine Youth Participation Community of Practice sessions, which serve to support and build the capacity of approximately 14 staff who facilitate significant youth participation programs;
- had 32 meetings with teams across the organisation to advise staff on developing and implementing youth participation activities; and,
- circulated 74 opportunities to participate to the approximately 60 young people connected to Orygen's youth participation programs.



Youth participation across Orygen

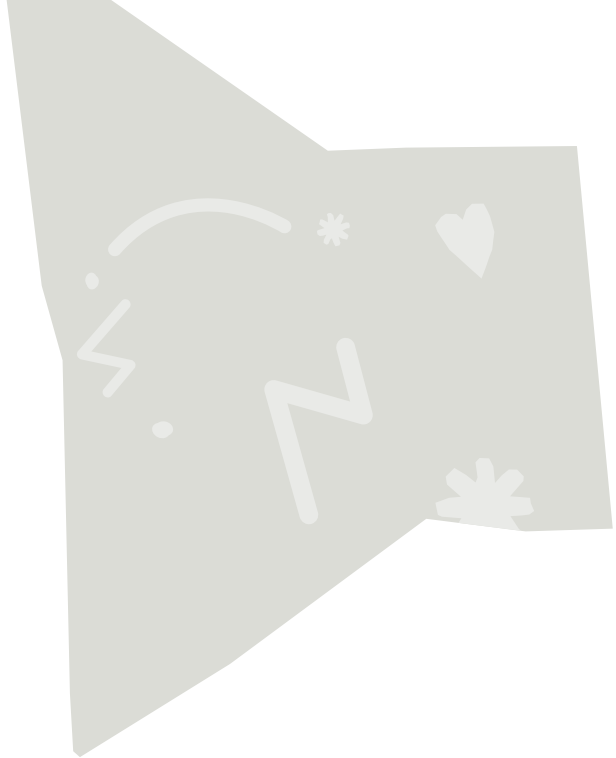
National Youth Advisory structures

For approximately five years, Orygen has had two national structures for young people from across Australia to participate in strategic decision-making. The National Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is a group of 10 young people from across Australia. The National YAC's role is to advise Orygen on the overall development of activities within the organisation. In particular, the YAC advises on the progress and implementation of the Engagement and Participation Strategy.

In addition, Orygen's Youth Research Council (YRC) is a group of eight young people from across Australia. The YRC's purpose is to provide strategic advice and support to research staff at Orygen as they commence their research projects. Both YAC and YRC members generally serve a two-year term. Both the YAC and YRC meet separately online each month and come together twice per year for a face-to-face weekend.

In late 2022, the 2019 cohorts of the National YAC and YRC completed their terms. This cohort's most significant achievement was its contribution to redesigning the National YAC and YRC. The goal of the redesign was to improve and strengthen the role of young people in strategic and organisation-wide decision-making in light of the significant growth Orygen has seen over the past five years. Based on workshops and a report developed by YRC and YAC, the national structures were redesigned to:

- form a single, larger National Youth Advisory Council with a strategic and organisation-wide purpose;
- introduce a model involving the rollover of two council representatives from one year to the next, to increase continuity of work and establish a peer-mentoring role within the YRC and YAC cohorts;
- improve onboarding and induction of National Youth Advisory Council members;
- focus on establishing formal structures for connection with Orygen's leadership; and,
- in partnership with Orygen's First Nations Team, introduce two identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions on the YAC.



In the 2022-23 period, the National Youth Participation Team began working towards implementing this vision. In this period, the team:

- advertised for the 16 positions on the new National Youth Advisory Council;
- successfully appointed two rolling council representatives from the previous cohorts of YAC and YRC;
- received 224 applications from across Australia, including 13 applicants for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions;
- appointed and onboarded 15 new YAC members from five states and territories;
- delivered induction and training for new YAC members; and,
- delivered a face-to-face weekend of training, priority setting and connection in April.

YAC MEMBERS

INTERESTS

Policy

Youth advocacy

Lived experience advocacy

Men's mental health

Psychosis advocacy

Research

Sustainability & climate action

First Nations' rights

Rural & regional advocacy

Governance

Improving services



The 2023 Youth Advisory Council.

Orygen Global

ASEAN-Australia Youth Mental Health Fellowship

The ASEAN - Australia Youth Mental Health Fellowships build the capacity, skills and voices of young people to create positive change in mental health awareness, policy and systems reform. A five-month online program, the Fellowships are open to young people aged 18-30 from Australia and ASEAN member states, who are passionate about mental health and who want to create change within their community and country. The program has been made possible through a partnership with the Australian Government, which has generously committed to the delivery of the ASEAN - Australia Youth Mental Health Fellowships.

Throughout the year, 15 young people participated in the inaugural ASEAN-Australia Youth Mental Health Fellowships' training modules, mentoring and global advocacy opportunities.

A highly successful inaugural four-day forum was held in Jakarta, Indonesia, where Fellows collaborated in-person, gained invaluable experience by publicly presenting their advocacy project and were warmly welcomed by the Head of the Australian Mission to ASEAN and the ASEAN Secretariat.

In addition to furthering projects in their own countries, Fellows made contributions in various settings coordinated by Orygen Global across 2022-23. This includes a group of Fellows being selected to prepare and present a policy brief for the ASEAN Secretariat about youth priorities and through a partnership with a Canadian mental health organisation Frayme, hosting a knowledge exchange session between Fellows from both organisations.



The Orygen Global team with the ASEAN-Australia Fellows in Jakarta, Indonesia, February 2023.

Orygen Digital youth participation programs

Orygen Digital's youth participation programs aim to amplify young lived experience voices across digital service and research areas. They support the improvement of MOST, Orygen Digital's flagship product, and the development of key research projects such as virtual reality and Mello.

The Orygen Digital Youth Advisory Group (YAG), now in its second year, is a body that advises teams across the division on service improvement, promotion, new products, services, research and strategy. The current 11 Orygen Digital YAG members are aged between 16–25 years and are based in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. They all have lived or living experience of mental health challenges and a passion for improving access to mental health through digital innovation. The Orygen Digital YAG was recruited as part of a pilot program in 2023 for a one-year term. They have since elected to extend their term for another year.

The Orygen Digital Youth Participation Network (YPN) is an advisory network of approximately 70 young people who participate in short-term participation activities in Orygen Digital projects. This can include service improvement, research areas, communications and media, and user experience research.

From the YPN, Orygen Digital also recruits specific youth advisory groups for projects requiring intensive or specific lived experience involvement, particularly in support of research. In 2022–23, project-specific advisory groups included the Mello Youth Advisory Group, REVIVE Youth Consultations Group, MOST Rebrand Design Group and MOST Body Image Content Consultations Group. Major achievements for these groups include the Mello app development and beta launch 2022–23 and Council Connect Weekend, a two-day event held in April.

The headspace Youth Advocacy Groups (YAG)

In the past year, Youth Advisory Groups (YAGs) have continued to play a pivotal role in connecting local young people with headspace's service planning and community initiatives. These dynamic groups collaborate closely with community awareness officers to ensure events, workshops, and campaigns resonate with, and are impactful for the community. Through their work, YAG members enhance the inclusivity of diverse communities, bust myths surrounding mental health, foster skill development among young people, establish secure environments for youth engagement, promote social networking and empower young voices in the decision-making processes at headspace. Their contributions are invaluable and have made a profound difference in our efforts to support the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

headspace Craigieburn

Craigieburn YAG members hosted a Trivia Night in late 2022 to recognise the great achievements of young people in the community. Awards were given recognising achievements at individual, community, and business levels. The event also emphasised the positive mental health impact that can come from celebrating success. The YAG also presented the Lifeskills program at two senior schools and one primary school, organised a Midsumma Pride March, held a Paint & Picnic event and Youth Fest celebrations.



headspace Sunshine

headspace Sunshine's YAG co-designed and delivered the Let's Talk forum, a day of conversations about the intergenerational, cultural and language barriers of connecting with parents/carers about wellbeing. They also co-facilitated eight weeks of Mental Health Masterclasses at Footscray High School. Masterclass topics included communicating confidently, managing emotions, getting active, eating well and mindfulness. YAG members also visited St Alban's Secondary College's Year 12 camp at University College to deliver the Redefining Success presentation, sharing their ideas about success and reflections from their own year 12 and university experiences.

headspace Melton

headspace Melton's YAG participated in a Melton Health Promotion Forum, where members presented on the purpose of YAG and the benefit of youth participation in health and community services. The YAG also partnered with the Melton Youth Services LGBTQIA+ Group, The Space, to celebrate Wear It Purple Day. Three high schools took part as well as independent members of the group with a total of approximately 25 young people in attendance. The YAG also designed and implemented headspace Day at the Library, in partnership with the Melton Library & Learning Hub. More than 50 young people from the community attended and engaged in this event.

headspace Werribee

In 2022-23, the Werribee YAG designed and facilitated a community festival around sexual health information and access titled Own It. Members also created a university expo for Year 12 students in the western suburbs designed to enhance their work and study prospects. They also supported community events and festivals, including mental health awareness initiatives at local schools and improved headspace Werribee's social media output.

headspace Glenroy

headspace Glenroy's YAG marked NAIDOC Week by raising community awareness with a lunch time stall at one of the local schools. This included a celebration of Indigenous culture and heritage through various activities and the use of a language map. At an event called Navigating Life Beyond Graduation, YAG members presented to an audience of Year 12s about life after school, providing valuable guidance to students and showcasing the impactful contributions of the YAG. YAG members and staff also undertook a series of focus groups examining the centre's initiatives, aimed at ensuring services appropriately align with the needs and expectations of the Glenroy community.

We'd like to acknowledge and thank the following dedicated young people who supported Orygen to improve its work and services, and improve the lives of young people, their families and communities.

2022 National Youth Advisory Council members

Mariah Amjad
 Amelia Ascitutto
 Katie Barton
 Elsie Beale
 Ezra Burnett
 Madeline Crothers
 Timothy Dotter
 Finlaey Hewlett
 Jeanti Profaca
 Kushagra Rathore
 Jessy Renouf
 Grace Vipen
 Mark Yin

Orygen Digital YAG

Oscar Bello
 Sophie Farinacci
 Katherine Kalaitzidis
 Lachlan Kearney
 Cassandra Lariche
 Elina Passant
 Grace Read
 Li Xuan Tan
 Kathan Winchester
 Toby Wong
 Gianna Ziero

headspace Craigieburn members

Jaye Barker
 Navdeep Birring
 Prtisha Dayal
 Charlie Eales
 Ky Ellahiyoum
 Lauren Falcone
 Courtney McSweeney
 Tobi Edward Ward-Boas

headspace Glenroy YAG

Kamryn Ali
 Liam Bachmann
 Zoe Borghouts
 Francesco De Maria
 Julia Ellul
 Eric De Francesco
 Ayesha Jayakody
 Sophie Ten Dam
 Laura Tsivoglou
 Natasha Saizi
 Olivia Zieba

headspace Melton YAG

Thomas Atkinson
 Phoenix Dean
 Sargun Kohar
 Ellie Kuchel
 William Moore
 Matt Richardson
 Robin Richardson
 Cheyenne Timms
 Amielia Wall

headspace Sunshine YAG

Paola Castelli
 Oliver Cole
 Noah Garnier
 Rachel Grimaud
 Fatima Ibrahim
 Milla Jacobi
 Christine Lu
 Thomas Oreilly
 Tanisha Pilla
 Elliot Price
 Neerja Singh
 El Vance
 Calvin Vu

headspace Werribee YAG

Ella Cross
 Sharla Eddleston
 Khushi Parikh
 Pooja Pressely
 and others

Platform members

Marcie Di Bartolomeo
 Mary Mansilla
 Sean Michelini
 Amelia Smith
 Caitlin Stefanovska
 Hejun Tang
 Wendi Zhao
 and others







**CLINICAL
CARE**



headspace continues to deliver for north-west communities

Across Orygen's five headspace centres – Craigieburn, Glenroy, Melton, Sunshine and Werribee – more than 23,000 occasions of service were provided to 4,557 young people in 2022-23. Each young person visited an average of five times and almost 30 per cent of young people received family inclusive services. About 1000 occasions of care were provided to First Nations young people, with an above average engagement rate per young person with the program and services. In addition, these five centres provided a high number of community projects and programs through schools and other pathways. headspace clinicians and staff continue to work closely with each centre's Youth Advisory Group to improve services and care, tailored to young people within the local community.

Trans and Gender Diverse Service embedded in five headspace centres

After launching in 2022, the Trans and Gender Diverse (TGD) Service this year moved from development to delivery, being embedded in all five of Orygen's headspace centres. The TGD Service now offers services through general practitioners, clinicians and peer navigators working across the five headspace sites. These services are easily accessible and have no wait times for service. The TGD Service also engaged a psychiatrist in the past year.

Prior to the establishment of this service in Victoria, the only referral pathway for TGD young people aged 12-16 was via the Royal Children's Hospital. The Orygen TGD team works closely with RCH and has taken 100 per cent of RCH referrals.

Gender affirming mental health training by RCH was made available to all headspace clinicians in March and Gender 101 training was provided by the TGD team at headspace centres including 'Lunch and Learns' on social, legal and medical affirmation. A TGD cultural safety module and clinical practice points were launched on the Orygen intranet, which will eventually become part the induction process when onboarding new staff.

The TGD Service is part of a consortium that includes the Royal Children's Hospital Gender Service, Monash Health Gender Clinic, Transcend Australia and Transgender Victoria.



A focus on lived experience

As part of the emphasis on lived experience across both Orygen and our partner organisation the Orygen Specialist Program, a new Head of Lived Experience was appointed and joined Orygen in late 2023 and will work with the workforce across both Orygen and our partner organisation. The Head of Lived Experience will focus on supporting the growth of this important workforce within Orygen's clinical services and more broadly across the organisation. Orygen now employs 32 youth and family lived experience workers that are working in peer work roles, with other lived experience roles existing in other areas of Orygen such as Research, Knowledge Translation and Orygen Digital, and as part of our partner organisation.

Youth Peer Workers working in these roles draw upon their experiences of mental and emotional distress, and recovery, as well as their experiences of navigating and accessing services, to support others through these experiences through building mutual and reciprocal relationships. Similarly, Family Peer Workers act in a similar role with families, carers, and supporters by drawing upon their experiences of supporting young people with mental ill health. Using this first-hand knowledge, Youth and Family Peer Workers build relationships based on a collective understanding of shared experiences, self-determination, empowerment and hope, with the aim of achieving the best outcomes for young people and their families.

Care and training streamlined in Orygen-VU partnership

In 2023 a new partnership between Orygen and Victoria University laid the foundation for the state's first fully integrated service hub, with headspace Werribee and Orygen Specialist Program to relocate its services to VU's Werribee campus later in the year. The new facility will welcome young people and their families with the full range of services offered across Orygen, from primary care to specialist program services.

In addition, both Orygen Specialist Program and headspace Werribee has provided mental health education and training for VU staff and students, as well as employment pathways that are critical to growing the state's strained mental health care workforce.

Orygen has accepted 70 VU students placements across the disciplines of nursing, psychology, social work, youth work, dietetics and nutrition into Orygen's headspace centres and Orygen Specialist Program.



Transformation

Delivering on the recommendations of the Royal Commission

The upcoming Transformation will help create a more integrated mental health care system for young people aged 12–25 and make it easier to expand and enhance services to support them.

In 2022–23 our Transformation was enabled by a number of key achievements, including:

- development of a model for electronic medical record implementation;
- establishment of our Lived Experience Workforce working group; and
- consultation across Orygen Specialist Program about staff needs for treating young people aged 12–14.

The changes that we have been working towards will help us and our partners to deliver on the recommendations from the 2019 Royal Commission into Victoria's mental health system.

We appreciate the support of our colleagues at Royal Melbourne Hospital, Royal Children's Hospital and the Department of Health over this period as we continue to work together toward Transition.

Specialist clinical care

Orygen at Home

Delivered by our partner organisation, Orygen Specialist Program, Orygen at Home has a multidisciplinary team that provides collaborative care for young people and carers in their home environment. Orygen received \$300,000 in funding from the HCF Research Foundation in May 2022 to examine the efficiency of this model of home-based mental health care for young people. The team's work has been informed by Orygen research and developed with a strong emphasis on family-inclusive practices and understanding of the impact of home-based care.

In the past year Orygen at Home has operated with 10 beds, with the intention of expanding to the service's full capacity of 15 beds in 2024. In partnership with Orygen's research programs, the Orygen at Home team has continued to review and develop the content of admissions to ensure that alongside the biological interventions offered, the capacity for psychological and client-centred psychosocial interventions is also included. Orygen at Home also collaborated with the psychosocial program to ensure opportunities for social engagement during the acute phase of recovery for young people in Orygen at Home care.



Eating disorders

With a strong focus on integrating research and treatment through collaboration, Orygen's newly established eating disorders research program focusses on improving prevention, early identification and intervention in the treatment of eating disorders. The eating disorders stream operated by our partner organisation the Orygen Specialist Program has continued to expand across 2022-23 and now provides treatment to young people with severe and complex eating disorders, in addition to ongoing provision of training and secondary consultation. The treatment approach is multidisciplinary and includes medical management, psychological intervention and dietetic input, as well as working with the young people's support networks.

Hospital Outreach Post-Suicidal Engagement (HOPE)

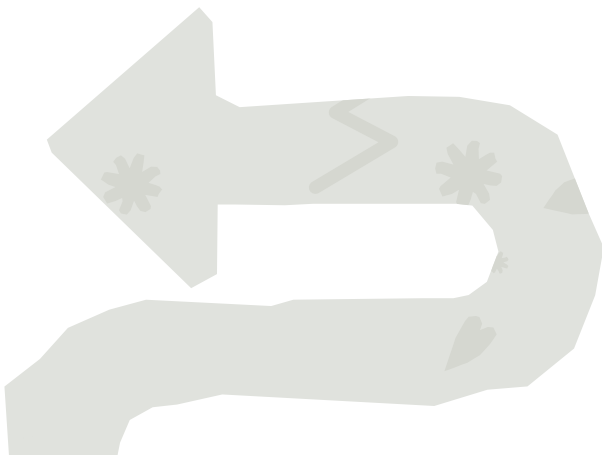
Orygen Specialist Program's Hospital Outreach Post-Suicidal Engagement (HOPE) team provides responsive follow-up after a suicide attempt, or ideation, within 24 hours, with clients seen for an appointment within 72 hours of referral. HOPE is now in its second year of operation, informed by Orygen research and delivered by our partner organisation the Orygen Specialist program. Orygen's Suicide Prevention Research team has been funded by the William Buckland Foundation and an NHMRC Partnership grant to conduct a five-year evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of HOPE. The team has completed qualitative interviews with young people, family members and clinicians on their experiences in the first year of the service. In 2024, a longitudinal study including more than 300 young people will commence to determine the effectiveness of the service in reducing suicidal thoughts and behaviour, and the impacts on the wider health system.



Orygen Recovery (YPARC)

Orygen Recovery is a community-based residential facility that provides a short-term 'step up' for a young people aged between 16-25. Orygen Recovery assists young people to work on recovery goals, transitioning to care at home or to prevent an admission to hospital. It has a multidisciplinary workforce, predominantly run by nurses and psychosocial recovery staff, in line with other PARC models. Other team members include a family clinician, psychiatrist, psychiatric registrar as well as a family and youth peer workforce.

Over the past 12 months Orygen Recovery has continued to grow and expand its services. In July Orygen Recovery passed the initial accreditation to run a 24-hour service for 10 young people, which, with amplified staff capacity and experience, increased to 12 beds in March and further to 15 in April. The program is now offered state-wide and to private providers. More than 250 young people have used the service since it opened in May 2022, with a number returning to consolidate the skills they learned during their first visit.







**RESEARCH AND
TRANSLATION**

Orygen is Australia’s largest mental health research organisation and the largest clinical research organisation for youth mental health in the world.

Our research program is focused on impact; by integrating research with care, we aim to create a brighter future for all those impacted by mental health disorders.

These pillars provide a connection between research and clinical care like no other mental health organisation in the world.



In 2022–23, our research priorities included:

Eating disorders: The newly established eating disorders research program uses a range of biological and psychosocial measures to gain a better understanding of how eating disorders progress and are maintained, and how we can develop and trial novel therapies. The team's aim is to improve prevention, early identification and intervention, and treatment of eating disorders.

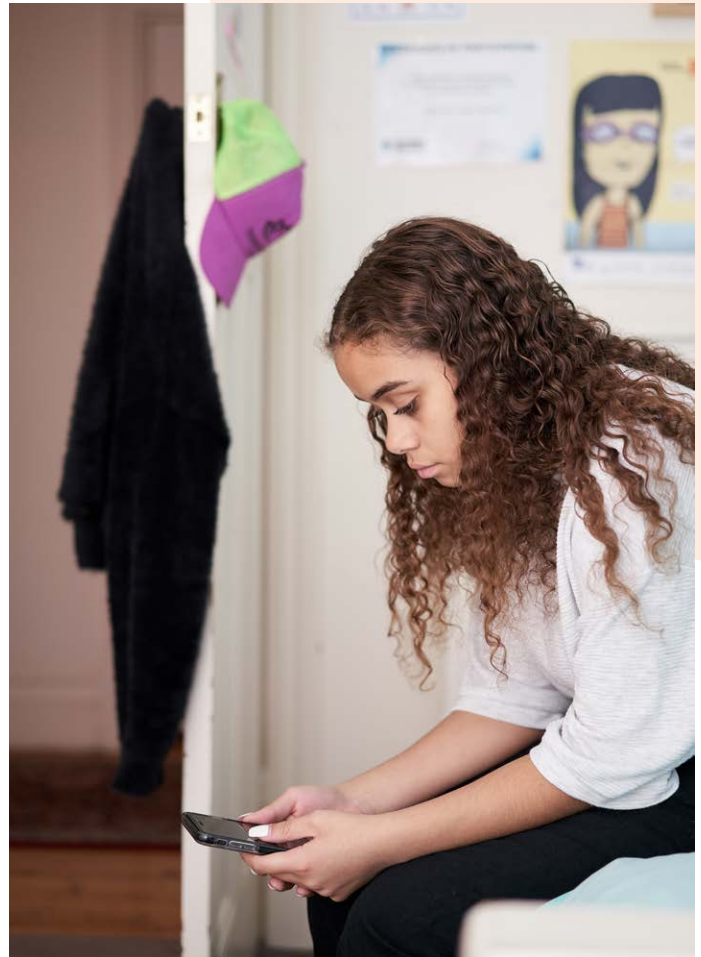
Social exclusion: This team aims to understand the extent to which young people in Australia are socially excluded, and the strong links between social exclusion and poor mental health outcomes such as loneliness and high psychological distress.

Suicide and self-harm: The suicide prevention research program is comprised of a number of separate projects that seek to examine the efficacy, safety and acceptability /of interventions specifically designed for at-risk young people.

Orygen Digital: The primary goal of this team is to pioneer cutting-edge technologies aimed at enhancing youth mental health. These projects encompass virtual reality, artificial intelligence, online social media platforms, and real-time digital support available on demand.

Clinical neuroscience: The objective of this research program is to advance our comprehension of the biological underpinnings of mental illness among young people. This encompasses various aspects, including brain imaging (examining structure, function, and chemistry), cognitive abilities (such as memory and attention), as well as analyses derived from blood samples (such as genetics and immune responses).

Early psychosis: This program focusses on comprehending the biological and psychosocial elements linked with the initial symptoms and early occurrences of psychosis and mania. This research priority includes the work of the Australian Early Psychosis Collaborative Consortium (AEPCC), which brings together researchers, clinicians and young people with lived experience to improve outcomes for young people with early psychosis.



Mood and anxiety: This team is centred on gaining a deeper understanding of depression, anxiety and bi-polar disorder in young people, along with determining the most effective treatment approaches.

Personality disorder: This program is dedicated to comprehending, preventing, and treating severe personality disorders.

Ultra-high risk for psychosis: This team focusses on young people who may be at increased risk of developing schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, and includes the work of the international research network, PRESCIENT.

Research highlights

This is a selection of just some of the Orygen studies underway during the year.

COGNITION RESEARCH

Development of world-first scale to measure cognitive strengths

The cognition research team is in development of a world-first scale to measure cognitive strengths for young people with mental ill-health. This focus on strengths represents a paradigm shift from the traditional focus on cognitive deficits in mental illness. Previous work demonstrates that while young people wish to have cognitive difficulties validated and addressed, they also want to focus on improving and maintaining their strengths. Focussing on cognitive strengths can help to engage important psychological factors for the treatment process, such as self-esteem and motivation. The scale is currently being developed in a sample of individuals from the general population. It will be tested in a youth mental health sample and finalised in 2024.

Validating cognitive screening for first-episode psychosis

An Orygen-led research study was awarded almost \$2.3 million by the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) in 2021 to validate cognitive screening tools for first episode psychosis patients. The CogScreen study addresses a key gap in clinical practice, whereby clinicians do not currently have a quick and effective method of screening for cognitive difficulties, despite being very common for young people with psychosis. In the past year, the CogScreen team has made significant progress in advancing the study, including finalising the study protocol, gaining ethics approval, engaging interstate and international partners, and hiring new staff members. The study will recruit its first participants in late 2023.

TRANSLATIONAL NEUROSCIENCE

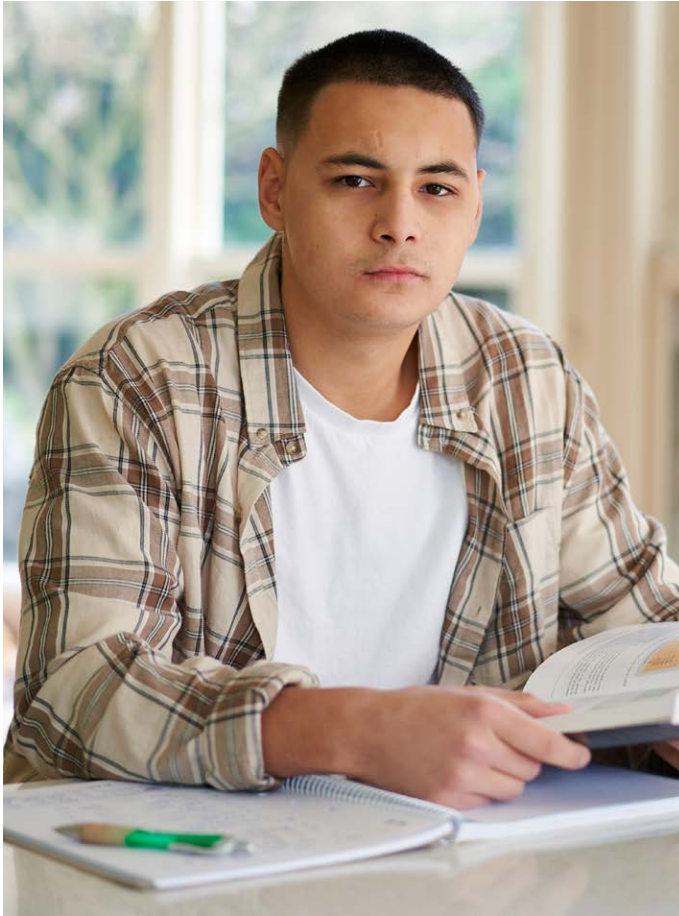
Helping young people with psychosis get the right treatment quickly

For around 30 per cent of young people experiencing psychosis, first-line antipsychotic medications are not effective. Instead, a portion of these young people tend to respond to another medication – clozapine.

Unfortunately, our ability to determine who will fail to respond to first-line antipsychotic medications and instead need a prescription of clozapine is very limited. As a result, finding the right treatment for young people with psychosis can often be a long and difficult process. If we can easily predict those who won't benefit from standard medications, we can help these young people find the right medications as early as possible and improve their quality of life.

The GAMMA study aims to find out whether measuring brain activity through an electroencephalogram (EEG) can help make these useful predictions. First-line antipsychotic medications and clozapine affect different naturally occurring chemicals in the brain. By examining electrical activity associated with these chemicals, we may establish a way to identify the best medication treatment for every young person with a psychotic illness.





FUNCTIONAL RECOVERY

VTAC Partnership Project supported by TAL

Generously supported by the TAL Foundation, Orygen is working in partnership with the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) to better understand the mental health impact of a range of events on young people completing Year 12 and applying for university.

Every year, approximately 60,000 young people apply to go to university in Victoria. These applications are handled by one central agency, VTAC. Included in the applications are requests for special consideration under the special entry access scheme (SEAS). This scheme aims to compensate for educational disadvantage that a student may have experienced for a range of reasons including mental ill-health. By examining this data we can see the impact that events like bushfire, drought, regional unemployment, pandemics, and others have on the mental health of Year 12 students as reflected in their SEAS applications.

The partnership has been working since 2017 and examining data since the 2019 cohort of applicants. Early results have allowed us to see the significant impact of the pandemic. However, also striking is the separate impact of the 2019-2020 bushfires, which is also observable.

Insights gained from this partnership will allow for more focussed support to be provided to Year 12 students in communities impacted by these kinds of events in the future. This will help more young people make a successful transition from their secondary to post-secondary studies, give them a greater chance of realising their educational and career ambitions, and reduce the likelihood of developing a more persistent or disabling mental illness.

Opportunities to make this a national project, as well as linking to other related datasets such as NAPLAN, are being explored. The long-term potential for identification and mitigation of mental health risk in Year 12 students through this project is immense and exciting.



SUBSTANCE USE

Novel therapy aims to reduce use and address mental health concerns

Use of alcohol and other drugs typically starts in adolescence, with the prevalence of substance use disorders peaking between ages 18-20. Young people with mental ill-health are at high-risk of having problems with substance use. Despite this, young people do not typically seek help for substance use problems until they become severe, meaning it can often take years before young people receive help. This study is a randomised controlled trial of a novel integrated psychological therapy which aims to reduce substance use while also addressing mental health concerns in young people presenting to headspace services.

The trial completed the recruitment phase in July 2023 and recruited young people from headspace services in Werribee, Glenroy, Sunshine and Craigieburn. Follow-ups will continue until July 2024. The study was funded in 2018 by one of Australia's largest independent family philanthropic funds, Gandel Philanthropy, and by the Marian and EH Flack Trust.

Helping people manage methamphetamine use

Methamphetamine use is associated with several harms, particularly in young adults. There is a lack of effective options to help people manage their methamphetamine use: medications are needed to complement psychosocial treatment and improve outcomes. The MASKOT study aims to determine the safety and acceptability of ketamine as a treatment for young adults aged 15-35 who use methamphetamine. The MASKOT study is supported by a seed funding grant awarded to Orygen by the National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs. The study will complete recruitment in 2024.

Promising initial results for smoking cessation early intervention study

In Australia, cigarette smoking is disproportionately concentrated in vulnerable groups, including people experiencing mental illness. One such group is young people with features of borderline personality disorder. The MYSS-HYPE study investigated whether contingency management - a behavioural treatment providing structured financial incentives for periods without smoking - is safe and acceptable in young people with borderline personality disorder features being treated at Orygen's HYPE and Youth Mood Clinics. Nine young people have completed the study, with promising initial results. Recruitment concluded in October 2023. MYSS-HYPE is funded by the Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences Faculty at the University of Melbourne.

Cannabis use disorder

Cannabis use disorder affects more than six per cent of young Australians before the age of 25. Many seek help, but there are limited effective treatment options. GRACE will be the first study internationally to investigate the potential effectiveness of a non-stimulant attention-deficit hyperactivity medication - guanfacine XR - to reduce cannabis use and improve function in young people seeking treatment for their cannabis use. The GRACE study is part of a formal industry partnership with the Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS), the largest provider of alcohol and other drug services to young people in Victoria. GRACE began recruitment in mid-2023 and is expected to conclude in September 2025. It is supported by an Alcohol and Drug Research Innovation Agenda (ADRIA) grant, awarded for the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services via the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association.

MOOD AND ANXIETY

Social anxiety in autistic youth

Autistic young people experience extremely high levels of comorbid mental illness, with social anxiety being particularly common, however there are limited effective treatments.

PAPAYA is a randomised controlled trial funded by the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF). It will test whether a novel medication-assisted psychotherapy approach improves social anxiety in young autistic people and is expected to start recruitment in April 2024.

Orygen study the first to evaluate suicidal mental images

Suicidal ideation can take the form of verbal thoughts or mental images. The Mental Images of Suicide at Orygen (MISO) study is the first study to evaluate suicidal mental images in young people with mood disorders. Initial published pilot data suggests that suicidal mental images are very common, with 66 per cent of the young people reporting to experience these images often. Distress resulting from these images, but not verbal suicidal thoughts, was associated with the number of past suicide attempts. Data collection is currently ongoing in a larger sample. In addition, a new study (funded by Suicide Prevention Australia) has been initiated which aims to pilot test a novel treatment for this specific form of suicidal ideation (i.e., suicidal mental images): imagery rescripting. Clinicians from Orygen's Mood Clinic have been trained in administering the intervention and recruitment for the study is ongoing.

Worldwide leader in neuroimaging

Orygen leads the largest neuroimaging consortium on suicidal thoughts and behaviours globally. It brings together researchers from more than 60 research institutes worldwide to share data from more than 15,000 people with and without suicidal thoughts and behaviours (funded by the National Institutes of Health). The team's first publication focussed on young people and showed that abnormalities in brain structure of the frontal pole may represent a vulnerability for suicide attempt in young people with mood disorders. The team also leads the ENIGMA Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) consortium, the largest international consortium to date that pools neuroimaging and clinical data from more than 50 sites worldwide to elucidate neurobiological mechanisms of depression. The team has published the largest studies on brain alterations associated with depression using this dataset.

Early intervention for bipolar disorder BLENDS forms of care

A pilot trial comparing a multi-component model of early intervention for bipolar disorder (termed BLEND) with an enhanced form of standard care (termed ESC) has been conducted at Orygen. BLEND combines bipolar-specific psychology, psychiatry, and peer-support work with online, digital content via MOST, and aims to improve outcomes for those in the early-stages of bipolar disorder. BLEND was safe and acceptable to young people, and feasible to deliver in settings similar to headspaces or other integrated secondary care settings.

A larger trial is now underway using the BLEND model with a larger sample size to determine the effectiveness of the model relative to ESC in reducing the proportion of time young people with bipolar disorder are in mood episodes. Based on data and feedback from the BLEND-1 pilot trial, episodes of care have been extended to eight months. Recruitment for BLEND-2 is anticipated to start before mid-2024.

Body image and eating disorders

The newly-established eating disorders research program uses a range of biological and psychosocial measures to gain a better understanding of how eating disorders develop and are maintained, and how we can develop and trial novel therapies. The team's aim is to improve prevention, early identification and intervention, and treatment of eating disorders.

The research undertaken by the eating disorders team uses comprehensive neurobiological, biological, psychological and socio-cultural methods, and is focussed primarily on three interrelated streams:

- Understanding the factors and mechanisms involved in the development and maintenance of eating disorders to inform prevention and treatment.
- Developing tools such as biomarkers that can be used for more accurate diagnosis, early intervention and prevention of eating disorders.
- Developing more effective interventions and treatments for people with eating disorders and improving clinical services and support programs for people with eating disorders (and their supports) across the continuum of care.

The team has been working on establishing innovative projects within each of these streams at Orygen. Among the most important studies is the establishment of a world-first lived experience-informed clinical research registry for eating disorders. This registry will be implemented in the eating disorders clinical service at Orygen and will collect important information that will help improve the understanding of eating disorders and how we can better tailor treatments.

AT-RISK OF PSYCHOSIS RESEARCH

PRESCIENT: Record-breaking Orygen study part of world's largest UHR dataset

PRESCIENT is an international research network with the overall aim to improve prediction of clinical outcomes in the ultra-high risk (UHR) for psychosis clinical population in order to better direct existing treatments and to identify novel treatment targets.

The study received a \$33 million grant from the United States' National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 2020, believed to be the largest competitive grant ever awarded by the NIH to Australian-led medical research.

PRESCIENT is part of the NIH-funded [Accelerating Medicines Partnership \(AMP\)](#) in Schizophrenia, AMP Schizophrenia (AMP SCZ). This public-private partnership aims to meet the need for early therapeutic interventions for people at risk of developing schizophrenia and other psychoses.

The PRESCIENT research network consists of Orygen as the Australian hub, nine international recruitment sites, and a number of scientific partners.

Participants, recruited over a two-year period, receive standard clinical care, and data will be collected across a range of modalities, including clinical information, neurocognitive, neuroimaging, neurophysiological information, fluid biospecimens, digital biomarkers, and speech and facial data. PRESCIENT recruitment has progressed well this period, mainly at Orygen and headspace clinical services. When combined with data from another research network, ProNET, it will be the world's largest and most comprehensive UHR dataset. Recruitment is on track to end in September 2024.

Findings from AMP SCZ will enable researchers to develop algorithms and risk calculators that predict the course of illness in UHR individuals. This will set the stage for a range of clinical trials of novel treatments, particularly biomarker guided treatments, following the progress made in other Accelerating Medicines Partnerships, such as in diabetes and Alzheimer's disease. The impact will be maximised through rapid data sharing and an 'open science' approach.



The Self, Neuroscience and Psychosis (SNAP) Study

SNAP is a large observational study that aims to empirically test an integrated neurophenomenological model of schizophrenia spectrum disorder based on disturbance of the basic sense of self. The study is funded by the Wellcome Trust, UK. The concept of “self-disturbance” has been theorised to be a key vulnerability marker of schizophrenia and incorporates anomalous experiences such as disturbed senses of ownership, agency, first person perspective, and identity formation. If this theoretical model of schizophrenia spectrum disorders is validated through the SNAP study, the team hopes to translate it into tools that can be used in clinical practice to inform diagnostic, prognostic and treatment decision-making.

The sample will be made up of 400 help-seeking young people at ultra-high risk of psychosis, 100 help-seeking young people experiencing other psychiatric concerns (clinical comparison group), and 50 healthy control participants. All participants will complete clinical, neurocognitive, and electroencephalographic assessments. The SNAP team has currently enrolled 210 young people to the study.



Australian Early Psychosis Collaborative Consortium (AEPCC)

AEPCC brings together researchers, clinicians and people with lived experience to improve outcomes for young people with early psychosis.

With initial funding from the Wellcome Trust, AEPCC is building three connected systems, which are firsts for the mental health sector and modelled on best practice approaches used in other fields such as oncology.

Clinical Trials and Translation Network (CTTN)

The CTTN brings together the early psychosis research community nationally to design innovative large-scale clinical trials based on priority areas. The inaugural AEPCC CTTN forum was held in March and saw researchers working alongside clinicians and people with lived experience to set research priorities for the sector. Following extensive consultation, AEPCC is set to facilitate national clinical trials that aim to provide answers as to what treatments will deliver the best long-term outcomes for people with early psychosis.

Clinical Quality Registry (CQR)

AEPCC has continued to develop and test the web-based application, CQR, that clinicians will use to routinely collect, analyse and report client data. The CQR will generate client summaries, making it easier for both clinicians and clients to chart progress and make treatment decisions. It will also increase knowledge sharing between different clinical sites to ensure every client receives best practice treatment nationally. In 2024 the CQR will be trialled at five clinical sites: EPICC in Melbourne, Bondi Junction and St Vincent's in Sydney, as well as sites in Adelaide and Darwin.

Lived Experience Network

In the past year the Lived Experience Network Establishment Committee (LENEC) increased to 19 members, including young people who have experienced early psychosis and their carers. Meeting monthly, the LENE has provided advice on the design of several research studies. It has also been developing an Instagram account, that will enable those with lived experience to connect with the early psychosis community, understand psychosis better and stay across the latest evidence. The account will launch in March 2024.

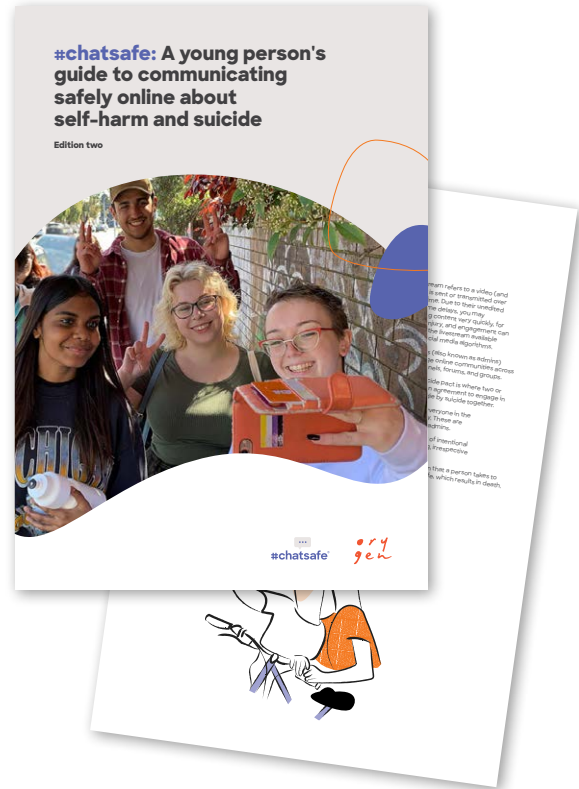
SUICIDE AND SELF-HARM PREVENTION

Preventing suicide in schools: the MAPSS project

The aim of the Multi-modal Approach to Preventing Suicide in Schools (MAPSS) project is to evaluate a suicide prevention program integrating three components: 1) psychoeducation workshops delivered to all Year 10 students; 2) screening to identify students at risk; and 3) delivery of online cognitive behavioural therapy (Reframe IT) to students experiencing suicidal thoughts. The program is a partnership with the University of Melbourne, Lifeline Australia and the Victorian Department of Education and Training, funded by The National Health and Medical Research Council.

The study commenced in Victorian schools in 2020 but was restricted by COVID school closures during 2020-21. There are 1,449 participants to date, (median age = 15.5 years, 52 per cent female) recruited from 20 high schools across north-west Melbourne.

Preliminary results indicated that 36 per cent of participants experienced some level of suicidal ideation, with suicide attempts in the sample from the last 12 months less common (5 per cent) but still prevalent. Despite this, fewer than half of students experiencing suicidal thoughts were currently linked with school wellbeing supports. The SafeTALK evaluation findings showed that 86 per cent of students found the program worthwhile and more than two thirds found it enjoyable. The study will continue until the end of the 2024 school year.



New #chatsafe resources keep young people safe online

Orygen's world-first guide for safe online conversations, #chatsafe, has been revamped to include advice for young people about how to discuss self-harm and suicide in a healthy manner on social media and other digital platforms.

The new guidelines also include advice for young people on how to engage with potentially dangerous online games, challenges and hoaxes. In another first, this second edition of #chatsafe also includes dedicated advice for influencers who create content related to mental health and may engage with young people with mental ill-health.

#chatsafe: a young person's guide for communicating safely online about self-harm and suicide, is an evidence-based set of guidelines created by Orygen's world-class research team in partnership with young people.

Originally published in 2018, this is the second edition of the globally recognised #chatsafe guidelines, which have been translated into 25 languages and can be found in the safety centres of many major social media platforms.





Knowledge Translation

The real-world impact of Orygen's internationally recognised research relies on ensuring this knowledge is translated into clinical practice that improves the lives of young people receiving treatment for their mental health.



The 'Reflecting on COVID, Climate and Complexity' panel at the National YES Symposium, chaired by Orygen Global's Maddison O'Gradey-Lee (right).

The 'inspiring' YES Community of Practice

In 2023, the Service Implementation and Quality Improvement (SIQI) team launched the Youth Enhanced Services (YES) Community of Practice (CoP) to provide opportunities for staff working in YES programs to connect, share experiences and learnings, and to build skills and knowledge.

More than 130 YES program representatives who registered for the CoP attended a calendar of online events on topics such as trauma-informed care, eating disorders, single session approaches to care and peer group supervision for emerging leaders.

The highlight of the CoP was the National YES Symposium held in May in Melbourne, which celebrated the great work of YES programs across the country. The symposium was opened by the Hon. Emma McBride, Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. The program involved a range of experts in keynote presentations, panel discussions and workshops covering topics from working with First Nations young people, digital approaches in youth mental health and working with young people impacted by climate change.

The Symposium was enthusiastically received by the 270 people who travelled from around Australia to attend. Feedback shows they valued hearing from a diverse array of voices and left feeling inspired.

The secondary consultation program: consult, reflect, enhance

The SIQI team has delivered a secondary consultation program that has provided specialist input and case-based learning to youth mental health services nationally since 2019. In response to the positive feedback from participants, the program has scaled up to include three streams: psychiatry secondary consult, specialist clinical secondary consult and reflective practice.

In the past year, 35 secondary consultations were delivered to seven services. Of these, 17 sessions were psychiatry-based, 13 were specialist clinical consults, and five were reflective practice.

An internal evaluation of the program demonstrated the program is continuing to meet an important need for services across the country, building the knowledge and confidence of staff and reducing stress of participating clinicians.

“It allows the worker and team to feel supported, and that it is not sitting on their shoulders alone.”

YES program clinician reflects on Orygen's secondary consultation program

The Implementation Lab

Each year, the Implementation Lab, delivered by the SIQI team, provides 12 months of quality improvement support to YES programs and Primary Health Networks nationwide. In the past year, the team worked with four programs across New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the Northern Territory: delivering five workshops, 11 secondary consults and 37 meetings with lab sites.

The support provided to services included piloting the MOST platform, refining and piloting new eligibility criteria, reviewing service models, improving referral pathways and embedding reflective practice.



The SIQI team.

Australian Early Psychosis Program (AEPP)

The AEPP team is responsible for supporting the headspace early psychosis program in several ways. In the past year key activities have included workforce development and support through workshops, clinical consultation and an online learning management system, while also providing strategic support for leaders, PHNs and other lead agencies.

Online workshops were offered to all sites and locations and reflected the needs of the services. This included an introduction to cognitive behavioural therapy for psychosis, comorbid substance use and psychosis, working with young people from multicultural backgrounds experiencing psychosis and comprehensive assessment of at risk mental state (CAARMS).

Participants were asked to reflect on their learnings, consider how their practice would change and how they would embed their new knowledge into practice and share this information on the Hub.

Chinwags give workforce new connections

A new addition to the team's regular avenues of connection to the workforce is 'Chinwags'. This way of translating knowledge involves a subject matter expert or person with clinical or lived experience of a specific area speaking without a formal presentation, meaning the audience (the early psychosis workforce) can ask questions that are clinically relevant to them. Some of the themes in 2022-23 have included working with BPD and psychosis, family work, what's culture got to do with it?' and vicarious trauma and self-care. Evaluations have shown Chinwags to be a popular model for ongoing knowledge transfer.

Qualitative evaluation feedback:

“
Great work with the online training. Loved the breakout groups and role playing.
Wonderful.”

“
This format was great! I loved the webinar/discussion followed by consultation to apply to real life.”



Virtual and in-person forums

A major focus of the past year has been the AEPP forums program, designed to promote networking and educational opportunities. The early psychosis forum held in August was the first in-person event following pandemic lockdowns, with 78 people attending in Adelaide. The theme of the forum was *Review and Renewal*.

In February, more than 80 participants attended an online forum covering topics such as ADHD and cognition.

From top to bottom:
Orygen's AEPP team at the National YES Symposium with Orygen Global Director Craig Hodges (centre);
Participants in the February AEPP online forum.

Mental health in elite sport

Orygen partners with AFL to deliver mental health program guide

Commissioned by the AFL, Orygen and researchers from the University of Melbourne in 2023 released a comprehensive evidence guide, ‘What works for mental health in sporting teams?’. The guide was designed to help sporting teams, clubs and organisations make informed choices about the implementation of mental health programs, based on available evidence about the effectiveness and safety of existing programs. Throughout the guide, a star rating system was used so readers could quickly identify the level of evidence for each program, as supported by the most current available research.



Orygen team members alongside other conference guests inside the IOC Headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Orygen at International Olympic Committee in Switzerland

Professor Rosemary Purcell, who leads Orygen’s Elite Sport and Mental Health team, was invited to join an International Olympic Committee (IOC) Expert Consensus Group on Elite Youth Athletes. The Expert Group convened in Lausanne in May to work on a consensus statement regarding best practices for protecting and promoting health and wellbeing in elite youth athletes. Prof. Purcell and members of the team at Orygen, including Associate Professor

Simon Rice, research fellow Kate Gwyther and PhD candidate Vita Pilkington, were also invited to lead a scoping review on mental health and wellbeing in elite youth athletes, to accompany the main consensus statement. This work has been submitted to the prestigious *British Journal of Sports Medicine* for publication and will be critical to promoting early intervention for mental health for elite athletes, and safeguarding the physical and psychological health of child and adolescent (youth) athletes worldwide.

Australian Eating Disorders Research and Translation Centre

In the past year, the centre has been working on three large signature studies aimed at gaining a better understanding of the mechanisms that underly eating disorders and running novel treatment trials in anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa/binge eating disorder.

Professor Rosemary Purcell is co-leading the translation stream and Associate Professor Andrea Phillipou is leading the national network of the centre, which is based at the University of Sydney. Dr Erica Neill from Orygen also joined the team in 2023, as a Research Translation Fellow working with the centre.

Orygen Global

ASEAN-Australia Youth Mental Health Fellowships

The ASEAN-Australia Youth Mental Health Fellowships are a five-month online program for young people aged 18-30 from Australia and ASEAN member states who are passionate about mental health and who want to create change within their community. Throughout the year, 15 young people participated in the inaugural ASEAN-Australia Youth Mental Health Fellowships' training modules, mentoring and global advocacy opportunities, including a four-day conference in Jakarta, Indonesia. The program has been made possible through a partnership with the Australian Government, which has generously committed to the delivery of the ASEAN-Australia Youth Mental Health Fellowships.

UNICEF Serbia

Orygen Global is working with UNICEF Serbia and the Institute of Mental Health Serbia to build the capacity of professionals in the health, education and welfare sectors to better support young people with mental health challenges. Over the past year, Orygen provided a comprehensive training program to 25 professionals in Serbia, who have since trained 150 professionals across the three sectors. A Minimum Service Package for Youth Mental Health is in development to support the implementation of the skills learnt through the training, with a plan to expand the program nationally pending evaluation.

Child and Youth Working Group of the Global Mental Health Action Network

As a co-chair, Orygen Global plays an active role in the Child and Youth Working Group of the Global Mental Health Action Network (GMHAN) which has over 400 members. In June GMHAN hosted a community session at the UNICEF Global Forum for Children and Youth. This event saw Orygen Global, UNICEF, United for Global Mental Health and the co-chairs of the Child and Youth Working Group convene with participants from all over the world to hear young people discuss the importance of authentic youth participation in youth mental health programs.

International Association for Youth Mental Health Conference in Copenhagen

Orygen Global was instrumental in ensuring that young people from low and middle resource countries were fully engaged as part of the International Association for Youth Mental Health biennial conference held in Copenhagen, Denmark in September-October. Young people from Africa, South America and Asia were actively involved in plenary presentations and workshops that highlighted some of the work being undertaken in more challenging settings to support young people's mental health. Four Orygen Global Fellows presented about their experience in the Fellowship at the conference, allowing them to present their projects and apply their advocacy skills on a global scale.





EDUCATION AND TRAINING



Thank you for perusing and accepting my application for the scholarship, I am very grateful for your feedback and feel very privileged to begin this journey into my upcoming career.

Jordan Bulzomi



I feel incredibly blessed receiving the scholarship for the Cert IV in the mental health and peer support. For me this opportunity encouraged and stoked the passion I have and has motivated me to work hard in achieving this qualification.

Caitlin McAilster

Orygen becomes a Registered Training Organisation

After successfully obtaining Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status in October, Orygen RTO launched its first Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work (consumer) in 2023. Through collaboration with the Victorian Department of Health, Orygen RTO was able to offer students the opportunity to apply for a total of 30 scholarships worth \$5000 each, including \$1000 study stipends. Orygen RTO subsequently welcomed 31 students for its very first cohort.

The course has been developed by a wide range of mental health professionals including peer workers, mental health nurses, social workers and OTs. The peer work content, training and assessment is led by Betty Do and Ash Hem. Betty and Ash bring invaluable expertise from their diverse experiences in mental health peer support, youth, LGBTQIA+, and disability fields. Orygen RTO looks forward to the continued success of its students in 2024.

Graduate education

Orygen's graduate education courses provide the latest theory, research and evidence-based approaches in mental health care to those who work with young people experiencing mental ill-health. In the past year, the Graduate Education team continued to build the skills and knowledge of the youth mental health workforce through a suite of online graduate programs delivered in partnership with the University of Melbourne. These include the Graduate Certificate in Youth Mental Health, Graduate Diploma in Youth Mental Health, Master of Youth Mental Health and Graduate Certificate in Managing Youth Self-Harm and Suicide.

Across 2022-23 almost 100 graduate professionals were enrolled, including psychiatrists, GPs, nurses, psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, counsellors, student welfare coordinators and teachers.

Orygen's Professional Certificate in Youth Psychiatry also saw 23 students complete the program in 2023. The Professional Certificate is a one-year, graduate level program designed specifically for psychiatry trainees or consultants from Australia and overseas, who wish to specialise in youth mental health.

A process of collaboration that began in 2019, the Graduate Education team this year successfully attained approval from the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists to establish the Professional Certificate in Youth Psychiatry as part of an accredited training program, in a new psychiatric sub-speciality of youth mental health. It is due to launch in 2025.

The Graduate Education team has also engaged in extensive stakeholder consultations with industry experts in the past year, with a view to design and develop a suite of micro-credentials in youth mental health care for general practitioners. The proposed micro-credentials have been approved for development by the University of Melbourne and will be delivered in partnership with the university's Department of General Practice and Primary Care in 2025.



2022-23 Toolkits and Guidelines

Sexual health and school attendance challenges were the two key priority areas for resource development in the 2022-23 year.

The workforce development team, in collaboration with leading clinical experts, researchers, young people and families, produced a wealth of resources including a fact sheet on healthy relationships, an interactive online learning module on supporting sexual health and wellbeing in youth mental health services, a clinical practice point for mental health professionals supporting young people experiencing school refusal and a guide for promoting school attendance.

Orygen on Department of Education Mental Health School Menu

Orygen has two training packages on the Victorian Department of Education Mental Health School Menu: The Trauma Informed Care (TIC) and Brief Intervention Toolkit (BIT), which are available for purchase by secondary schools across Victoria.

In 2023, the workforce development team delivered TIC to two secondary schools (regional and rural) with a total of 155 people trained in trauma informed care. The TIC package trains participants in evidence-based best practice for providing trauma-informed care in education settings. It aims to build the capacity of schools to adopt trauma-informed approaches in their systems and processes. TIC also includes post-training implementation sessions to develop a sustainable, whole-school action plan to embed trauma-informed care, with the aim of supporting long-term impacts for students and the school community.

In post-evaluation, school staff reported improvements in knowledge and strong intentions to use trauma-informed approaches with students, with most seeing this as a high priority.

Looking ahead, in 2024 the workforce development team will be delivering the brief intervention toolkit to two secondary school wellbeing teams and TIC to all staff at two more secondary schools.



School mental health practitioners 100% satisfied with Orygen support

In 2022-23, Orygen clinical consultants have supported mental health practitioners working with young people in government schools across metro and regional Victoria, including English language centres and specialist schools.

The activities offered to MHPs include a practice advice line (PAL) available to MHPs during school terms between the hours of 9am-4.30pm, weekly virtual drop-in clinics, virtual 'Chinwags' twice a term and three spotlight forums where MHPs were invited to attend to listen and engage with clinical and non-clinical experts.

Across the year, there were 600 registrations across the three events.

100% 

of MHPs who attended reported that they would recommend the activity to a colleague, were satisfied with the content and format, and strongly agreed they would use what they have learnt in practice.



IPS framework launches nationwide

Orygen began rolling out workforce development activities for the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) workforce in 2022-23 across 50 headspaces nationally. This launch was enabled by the IPS Workforce Development Framework for headspace project, funded by the Australian Government.

These 50 centres deliver the IPS program, which integrates vocational support with clinical mental health care to focus on helping young people with mental ill-health return to work or study.

The framework was developed in consultation with IPS workers and key stakeholders and features a range of activities, including micro-credential training and a professional support program, to support the development and career progression of the IPS workforce in headspace.





**ADVOCACY
AND POLICY**

The Orygen Institute

After officially launching in May 2022, the Orygen Institute had an eventful first year. The Orygen Institute held two national and one international event focused on giving voice to new narratives in public policy conversations about youth mental health. Two of these events included workshops which, along with the team's policy analysis and development, generated new solutions for driving policy reform focused on supporting young people to thrive. The collective efforts of the policy team, a range of Orygen staff and workshop participants has enabled the Orygen Institute to set a new benchmark for policy impact.

A national youth suicide prevention plan

The Orygen Institute hosted an online discussion in July that considered what is needed to reduce self-harm and suicide among young people. Facilitated by Dr Melissa Sweet, founder of Croakey Heath Media, the panel included:

- Anne Hollonds, National Children's Commissioner;
- Dr Summer May Finlay, University of Canberra; University of Wollongong;
- Joe Ball, Switchboard Victoria; and
- Annabel Ramsay, batyr.

The panellists explored the issues impacting young people's mental health, the complexity of youth-focused policy and emphasised the importance of such plans interacting with other policies to ensure a cohesive, effective response.

International post-COVID workshop

In October, at the sixth International Youth Mental Health Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, the Orygen Institute facilitated a conference workshop that explored the policy priorities needed to improve youth mental health as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The workshop included presentations and activities from:

- Tricia Tan Hui Ling, Ministry of Health Advisory Group (Singapore);
- Dr Naeem Dalal, Zambia National Public Health Institute (Zambia);
- James Sale, United for Global Mental Health (UK); and
- Vivienne Browne, Orygen (Australia).

Workshop sessions were structured to enable a re-imagining of policy in response to COVID-19 and beyond. The four sessions focused on experiences of policy decisions during the pandemic, identifying policy priorities for youth mental health services, how would policy change and who should be involved and addressing power dynamics and incorporating empathic design.

Life transitions

The Orygen Institute released a policy report in December on supporting young people through life transitions. Young people navigate many changes throughout their lives, such as leaving school, finding career employment, making new friends and moving out of home.

These transitions are often connected, leading to change across many life domains. While transitions can be rewarding, they can also represent challenging and difficult times with long-term impacts. The policy report identified opportunities available to prevent or minimise distress for young people during times of change.

Launch of the Mission Australia and Orygen report on climate change and youth mental health

Orygen's partnership with Mission Australia continued in 2022-23 and included the release of a report revealing the alarming impact of climate concerns on the mental health of young people in Australia. Utilising Mission Australia's data from their annual Australia-wide survey of 19,000 young people aged 15-19, Orygen researchers identified that young people who reported being 'very concerned' or 'extremely concerned' about climate change were more likely to report several adverse indicators such as higher psychological distress and feeling negative about the future.

The authors of the report, published in April, called on governments to update their youth and mental health strategies to reflect the impact of climate change on young people's mental health, to upskill professionals in the realm of climate-related distress and to partner with young people to co-design solutions that will address their climate-related mental health concerns.

National summit on Intergenerational Fairness

Orygen hosted a National Summit on Intergenerational Fairness in April, in partnership with Think Forward, Foundations for Tomorrow, EveryGen and the Foundation for Young Australians. The event featured a keynote address from Sophie Howe, the first Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, and a panel of experts who discussed experiences and challenges of intergenerational inequity and its impact on young Australians. Other panellists included Joey Moloney, Grattan Institute; Jahdai Vigona, NT Young Australian of the Year 2023; Professor Susan Harris-Rimmer, Griffith University; and Bailey Riley, National Union of Students.



Delegates of the National Summit on Intergenerational Fairness, April 2023.

Submissions

The Orygen Institute made 29 submissions to a wide range of national and state and territory inquiries in 2022-23. In addition to submissions on health strategies and services, there were 11 submissions into inquiries relating to the social determinants of health, reflecting The Orygen Institute's expanded focus on the drivers of increasing youth mental ill-health. This focus matches the new Australian Government's development of a national wellbeing framework, *Measuring What Matters*. The value of participating in public inquiries was evident in the policy impact The Orygen Institute had, including the introduction of new MBS (Medicare Benefits Scheme) items to support allied health practitioners participate in case conferencing and inclusion of student wellbeing in the Productivity Commission's Review of the National School Reform Agreement.

Government relations

Over the past 12 months, we continued to meet regularly with key ministers and representatives in the Australian Government, including the Treasurer, the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Health and the Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. Orygen also met with several key state and territory leaders including the premiers of Victoria and Tasmania, as well as the ministers responsible for mental health in Western Australia, Queensland, NSW, ACT and Victoria.

Orygen was fortunate to also host the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Richard Marles MP and the Deputy Premier of Victoria, the Hon. Jacinta Allan MP at Orygen HQ in Parkville, to provide them with a tour of the facility and a demonstration of our virtual reality lab.

Clockwise: Professor Pat McGorry and the Hon. Richard Marles MP; Professor Pat McGorry and the Hon. Jacinta Allan, Premier of Victoria; The Hon. Richard Marles MP.





The Hon. Emma McBride MP, Head of Orygen Global Craig Hodges and Global Fellowship co-founder Maddison O'Gradey-Lee at MCEC.



Orygen also welcomed the Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon. Linda Burney MP, in March when our Executive Director and Head of the First Nations Team had the opportunity to discuss work underway against our Cultural Strengthening Action Plan and the important focus on supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of young Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders.

Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, the Hon. Emma McBride MP opened the Youth Enhanced Services (YES) symposium at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) in May. The event was attended by over 200 key service providers and commissioners and it was wonderful to have the valuable work being done by YES providers across the country acknowledged by the Assistant Minister.

During this period Orygen received a boost to funding for the National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health agreement between 2023-25 and secured a continuation of funding from the Victorian Government to deliver the Orygen Digital's MOST platform. Funding was also secured from the Victorian Government to establish an eating disorders research program at Orygen.

The Victorian budget handed down in May also included funding for a feasibility study and business case to build a youth inpatient unit at the Parkville site.

Orygen thanks all of our government funders for their continued support in 2022-23.





**DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION**

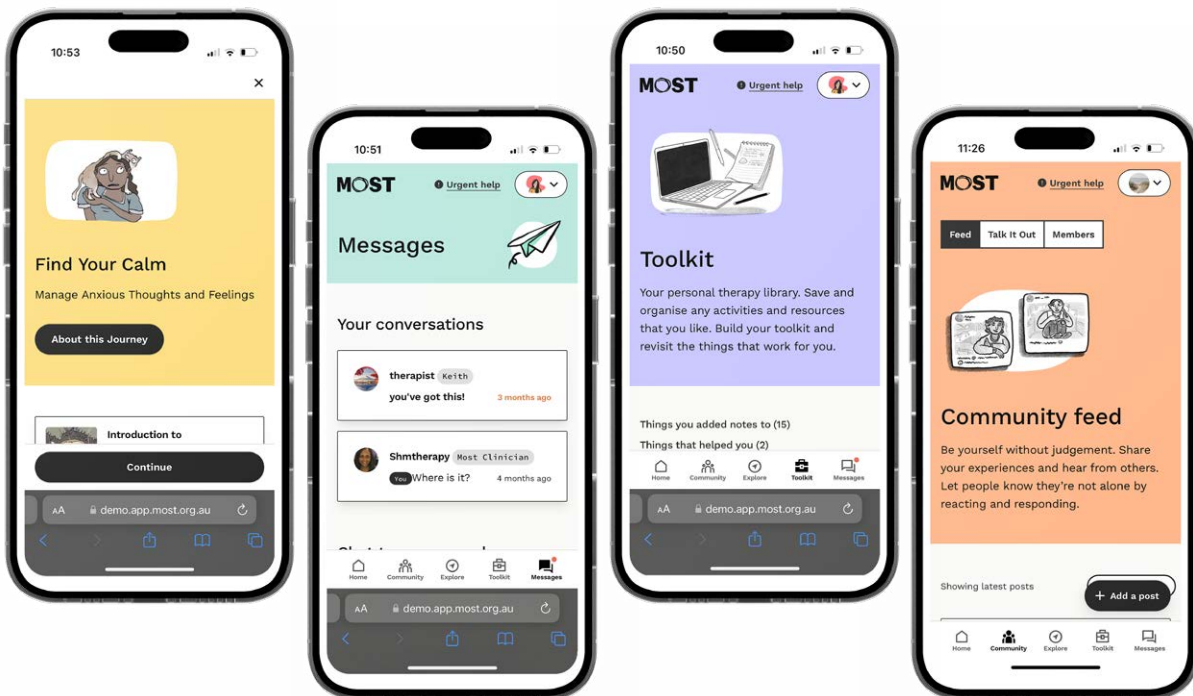
MOST marks milestone

Orygen Digital's flagship digital mental health service, MOST, celebrated an important milestone, ticking over 5000 users across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland in January. Following this exciting achievement, Orygen Digital successfully launched an app version of MOST, for iPhone in March and Android in June. Duplicating the web browser experience, the app has made it easier for young people to access MOST on-the-go by using their smartphones. The team also received renewed funding for MOST, to the amount of \$6 million, from the Victorian Government in the 2023-24 budget.

MOST then took another step in its growth strategy by launching in the Australian Capital Territory in June. It was made available through referral from the Canberra and Tuggeranong headspace centres, and Canberra Hospital's Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS). In addition, it was accessible through the Catholic Care Youth Wellbeing Program, marking the first time MOST has been implemented in a service to specifically address supporting young people too unwell for primary care, but not unwell enough for state-based services. More than 70 local adolescent mental health service workers in the ACT have received training and services have been referring young people to the additional support offered by MOST.

Award-winning MOST rebrand

Working with external agency Studio MASS, Orygen Digital's product team consulted with young people to define a new brand for the MOST experience. The new brand went live in October, along with improvements to make it easier to navigate through chosen activities and support. The creation of MOST's new look was the first product brand to be designed by Orygen outside the master brand. At the 2023 Australian Design Awards, Studio MASS won a silver medal in the Graphic Design - Identity and Branding category, for its work on MOST.



Orygen Digital receives a Wellcome investment

Orygen Digital's virtual reality (VR) program received a \$5.3m grant from UK charitable foundation, Wellcome, to create, trial and implement tailored VR therapy specifically to improve social cognition in young people with early psychosis. The funding will be used to test and implement a VR therapy program which can be rolled out across clinical practices nationwide post-trial. The trial, set to run from 2023-2025, aims to build national networks to deliver these cutting-edge therapies at scale around the country, and then internationally.

Mello launches with impressive trial results

Orygen Digital's world-first smartphone app which provides personalised therapeutic intervention for stuck thinking, Mello, completed a randomised control trial in late 2022. The results, which showed after using Mello for six weeks, 79 per cent of users experienced a reduction in depression and 82 per cent experienced a reduction in anxiety, were published in 2023. The beta version of Mello was launched in the App Store in May and the next version, Mello 2.0 will be released in 2024.



Premier the Hon, Jacinta Allen MP visits Orygen's VR lab in February. Below: with Professor Andrew Thompson and Dr Roos Pot-Kolder.



YOTES Berry Street launch

Thanks to corporate partner, RACV, a trial of the Youth Online Training and Employment System (YOTES) was launched in 2022-23. This digital platform supports young people attending Berry Street School, an independent specialist secondary school with campuses in Ballarat, Morwell, Narre Warren and Shepparton. YOTES is a moderated digital career support platform providing access to evidence-based career education and connecting young people to a qualified career practitioner, peer mentors and other students.

Young people attending Berry Street School were supported online and on-campus to explore their options, create career action plans and start gaining experience to support their next career steps. More than 80 students are involved in the YOTES trial, with young people seeking online support and accessing more than 1000 pieces of curriculum-aligned content.

To further integrate the platform into classroom settings and extend the support offered, Orygen staff spent more than 70 hours on campuses, supporting students and training 35 Berry Street School teachers and staff to use YOTES.



The Orygen, Berry Street School and RACV teams at the launch of YOTES in Schools in May.



A revolution in the way we work

Our people continue to play a pivotal role in supporting Orygen's growth and transformation.

Orygen's ongoing commitment to the health and wellbeing of our workforce cumulated in the delivery of a robust workplace health and safety strategy. This strategy has now delivered a broad range of improvements including a new reporting system that promotes incidents, including psychological safety incidents, being reported so they can be tracked and responded to efficiently.

An important focus for the year was the development of a robust reporting system, which was developed by the People and Culture team and resulted in the delivery of more insightful data. This in turn positively informed people strategies and programs. Data-driven decisions will continue to be used to positively impact our workforce and to support recruitment and retention strategies.

The P&C team continued to use contemporary strategies to attract a highly skilled workforce and introduced new starter recruitment and induction surveys to measure and inform these practices. Both surveys showed a 95% positive response rate. Equality and equity continued to be a focus, with introduction of an organisation remuneration framework and related policies.

To ensure Orygen people are proactively supported, service delivery models were refined by introducing a People Assist function to deliver timely support for first tier questions and advice.

Orygen's second organisation-wide staff engagement survey saw 74% of staff contribute to the survey. Results highlighted our people's commitment to Orygen's purpose, values and to one another, as well as opportunities for improvement such as processes and learning and development. The results continue to inform strategies and initiatives that harness our strengths and address challenges in the most impactful ways.



Volunteer assistance program

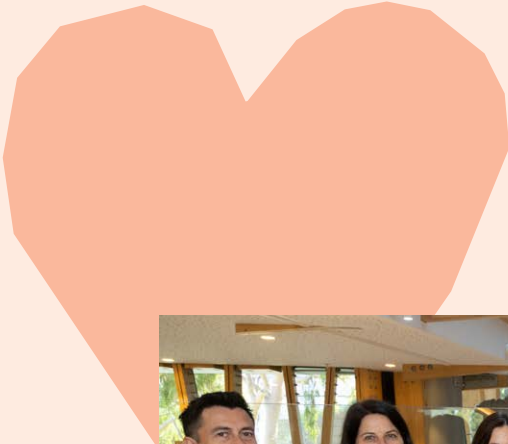
Orygen opened its volunteer-run assistance program in July, to support to young people and their families by providing much needed items such as clothing, non-perishable food and hygiene packs. During the program's first year, 20 volunteers were engaged to lead and operate the program under the supervision of an Orygen Volunteer Engagement Coordinator. The team fulfilled and delivered 115 clinician orders across the Orygen service, sourced more than 1000 items of new clothing via charity partner Thread Together, sourced and distributed five vans of nonperishable food items from charity partner Foodbank, sourced 550 hygiene and pamper packs via partner organisation Pinchapoo and distributed 200 Christmas hampers to Orygen's headspace centres in December.



A big thank you

Orygen extends our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated supporters and partners who stand alongside us in our mission to ensure young people can grow and thrive into adulthood. Your generosity profoundly influences how Orygen is able to positively impact the mental health of young people today and for years to come.

We thank our entire community of wonderful supporters, our major donors, corporate partners and trusts and foundations. Without your support, Orygen's reach and results would not be possible.



From top to bottom:
 Anthea Jackson (left), and
 Karlyn Molloy (right) from
 TAL visiting Orygen Parkville;
 TAL staff visit Orygen;
 Our corporate partners,
 RACV visit Orygen to see
 their support in action.



Our corporate and community partners

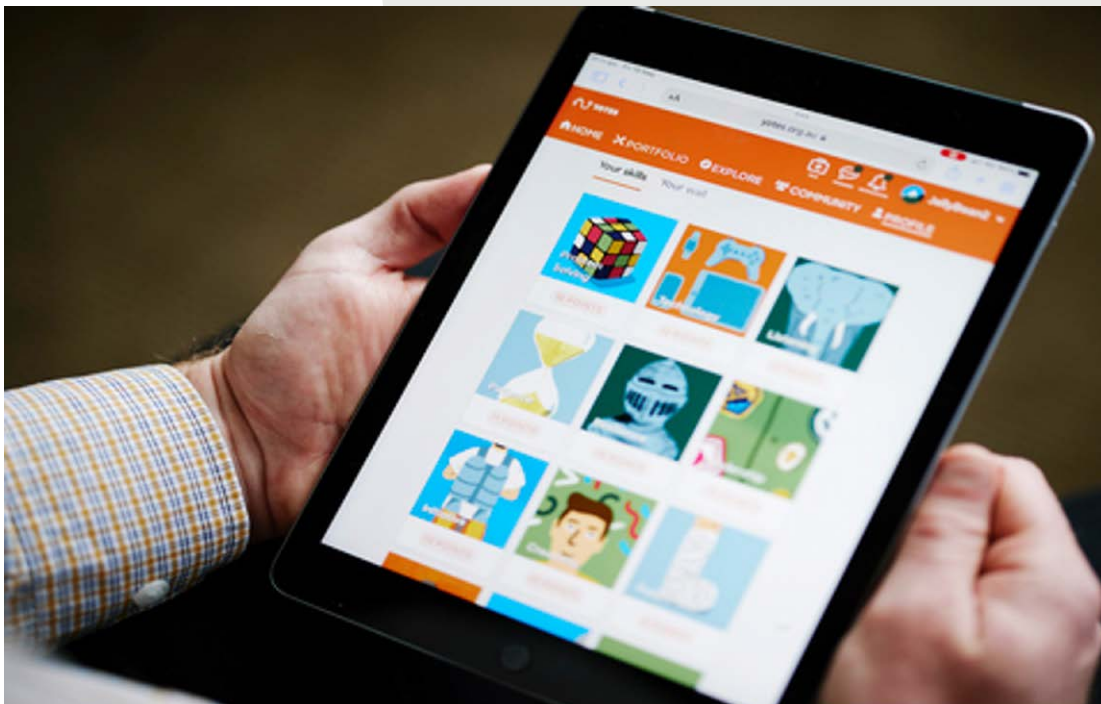
RACV supports young people to achieve education goals

Now in its third year, the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV) partnership with Orygen continues to support young people with mental ill-health across regional Victoria to achieve their education and employment goals.

Across 2022-23 the partnership enabled Orygen to launch the trial of the Youth Online Training and Employment Support (YOTES) digital platform in Berry Street schools across Victoria, as well as funding Orygen's Youth IPS Centre of Excellence, which provides support to IPS centres nationwide.

Orygen's Director of Employment and Education Partnerships, Gina Chinnery, thanked RACV for their crucial support.

"RACV has allowed us to expand our evidence-based vocational programs in a way that's really gratifying," she said. "Developing and launching initiatives like YOTES and IPS, which assist young people in reaching their career aspirations, is particularly meaningful as we know how much the experience influences their overall wellbeing."



The YOTES digital platform now available to Berry Street students, thanks to RACV.



TAL provides crucial support for Orygen VTAC partnership

The team at life insurance specialist TAL Australia and the TAL Community Foundation has Orygen's collective gratitude for their ongoing support. TAL assists Orygen to grow our evidence-based employment and education programs.

TAL's generosity has enabled Orygen to undertake two research projects to understand issues affecting students as they transition to further education and training, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Orygen is working in partnership with the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) to better understand the mental health impact of a range of events on young people completing Year 12 and applying for university.

As part of the project, researchers have examined the approximately 60,000 applications VTAC receives per year, to attend university in Victoria, namely the requests for special consideration under the special entry access scheme (SEAS). This scheme aims to compensate for educational disadvantage that a student may have experienced for a range of reasons including mental ill-health.

Professor Eóin Killackey, Director of Research at Orygen, said the project would open a window into this critical transition point in the lives of young people.

"By examining this data, we can see the impact that events like bushfire, drought, regional unemployment, pandemics, and others have on the mental health of Year 12 students as reflected in their SEAS applications," Prof. Killackey said.

"Understanding the impact of mental ill-health on young people as they navigate the transition to further education and training is the first step in developing supports before, during and after, to ensure they have the same opportunity as their peers to pursue their educational and vocational goals.

"The long-term potential for identification and mitigation of mental health risk in Year 12 students through this project is immense and exciting."

The partnership has been ongoing since 2017, with data examined from 2019 onwards. Insights gained from the partnership will allow for more focussed support to be provided to Year 12 students in communities impacted by these kinds of events in the future. It will help more young people make a successful transition from their secondary to post-secondary studies, give them a greater chance of realising their educational and career ambitions, and reduce the likelihood of developing a more persistent or disabling mental illness.

TAL

Pioneering philanthropic partner the Colonial Foundation helps Orygen grow through the years

Through its ongoing support, the Colonial Foundation has enabled Orygen to build its organisational capacity and direct funding where it is needed most. After providing seed funding to Orygen in 2001, the Colonial Foundation proceeded to contribute more than \$46 million over the next two decades. This ongoing philanthropic partnership has allowed Orygen to leverage Australian Government support, while also encouraging other philanthropic funders to take a similar approach.

Executive Director Professor Patrick McGorry said the Colonial Foundation has played a crucial role in allowing Orygen to become the globally renowned organisation it is today.

“Our partners at the Colonial Foundation have undoubtedly played a significant part in transforming the landscape of youth mental health care across Australia,” Professor McGorry said.

“Orygen would not be the world leader in youth mental health research, knowledge translation and clinical care that we are recognised as today, without their support.”

Orygen extends its thanks and appreciation to The Colonial Foundation and looks forward to a sustained prosperous partnership into the future.



William Buckland Foundation

Long-term supporters of Orygen, The William Buckland Foundation recognises that mental wellbeing is a fundamental building block to better outcomes in other areas of life. The Foundation is particularly proud of the work around Orygen’s systematic approach to youth suicide prevention.

Since 2017 the Foundation has committed \$1.2m towards suicide prevention and has committed a further \$125,000 to support the rollout of the Mello app through Orygen Digital.

Professor Patrick McGorry said the Foundation’s support was fundamental to achieving Orygen’s most important research goals.

“We extend our sincere gratitude to the William Buckland Foundation for their unwavering support of Orygen’s vital suicide prevention initiatives,” he said.

“Investing in suicide prevention for young people is an investment in our future. Early intervention, investing in research, and comprehensive treatments and clinical supports, can all make a lasting impact on the mental wellbeing of our young people.”





Our leaders

The Executive Leadership Team

Professor Patrick McGorry AO
Executive Director

Professor Mario Alvarez-Jimenez
Chief of Orygen Digital

Kerryn Pennell
Chief of Strategy and Engagement

Dr Leanne Geppert
Chief of Clinical Services and Operations

Chrissy McCallum
Chief Financial Officer

Professor Eóin Killackey
Chief of Research

Professor Andrew Chanen
Chief of Clinical Practice

Pamela White
Chief of People, Culture and Wellbeing

David Cooper
Chief Information Officer

Sarah Muller
Chief of Staff to the Executive Director

Professor Rosemary Purcell
Chief of Knowledge Translation

The Orygen Board

Sir Edward Byrne AC Kt

Mr Andre Carstens

Mr Benjamin Lannan

Professor Frances Kay-Lambkin

Emeritus Professor Helen Herrman AO

Ms Penelope Armytage

Mr Robert Goudswaard

Mr Robert Hadler

Orygen is a public company limited by guarantee with three members: The Colonial Foundation, the University of Melbourne and Melbourne Health.

Orygen's key management personnel are made of staff directly employed by Orygen, the University of Melbourne and Melbourne Health. Secondment arrangements are in place where staff are employed by entities other than Orygen, to conduct Orygen work.

Some key management personnel are independently remunerated by The University of Melbourne and Melbourne Health for roles that are adjacent to their responsibilities at Orygen.

In the interests of transparency, Orygen is disclosing the total remuneration paid to Orygen's key management personnel in roles within Orygen, as well as any positions adjacent to their work at Orygen, where they are remunerated by a member company.

Key Management Personnel remuneration

REMUNERATION RANGES	No. of KMP
\$500,000 - \$600,000	1
\$300,000 - \$400,000	5
\$200,000 - \$300,000	5
BOARD DIRECTORS	
CHAIRPERSON (\$75,000P.A.)	1
NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS (\$35,000P.A.)	7

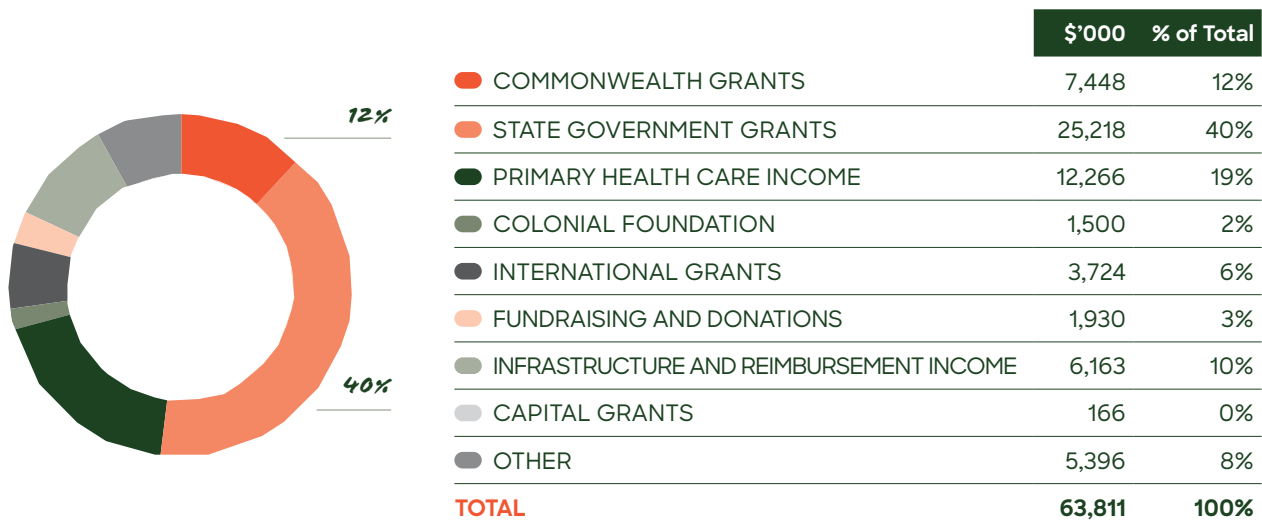
Note: The above ranges include KMP compensation from the University of Melbourne and Melbourne Health where there is overlap with their role at Orygen.

Financial statements

Consolidated statement of comprehensive income for year ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
REVENUE FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES	62,829	52,414
EXPENDITURE		
CONSULTANCY	3,279	1,816
DEPRECIATION	2,246	2,194
OCCUPANCY	3,064	2,712
PERSONNEL COSTS	46,960	37,553
MEDICAL SUPPLIES, TESTS AND PRACTITIONER PAYMENTS*	784	1,117
OTHER EXPENDITURE	9,009	6,113
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	65,342	51,505
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	982	(1,540)
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE PERIOD	(1,531)	(631)

Sources of revenue (Year ended 30 June 2023)



Consolidated statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
CURRENT ASSETS		
CASH AT BANK	17,455	10,555
TERM DEPOSITS	100	100
TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES	6,157	5,234
PREPAYMENTS	685	600
FINANCIAL ASSETS	26,749	26,776
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	51,146	43,265
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT	4,041	4,327
RIGHT OF USE ASSETS	4,670	5,132
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	8,711	9,459
TOTAL ASSETS	59,857	52,724
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES	24,790	19,611
INCOME IN ADVANCE	3,250	20
LEASE LIABILITIES	687	571
EMPLOYEE PROVISIONS	2,147	1,927
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	30,874	22,129
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
LEASE LIABILITIES	4,301	4,548
EMPLOYEE PROVISIONS	642	476
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	4,943	5,024
TOTAL LIABILITIES	35,817	27,153
NET ASSETS	24,040	25,571
EQUITY		
RETAINED SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)*	9,745	8,504
OYMHF RESERVE	5,809	5,200
UNEXPENDED FUNDS RESERVE	8,486	11,867
TOTAL EQUITY	24,040	25,571

*Includes project funds received, but committed to expenditure in future financial years.

A full copy of the Orygen Special Purpose Statutory Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2023 is available on the ACNC website, www.acnc.gov.au.

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JULY 2022 - June 2023

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