



First Step Staff  
January 2019

## Our Impact

2,652

people assisted by  
First Step in 2018  
in 14,000+ consultations



\$3,942,000

saved by tax payers  
through treating 115  
people for hepatitis C

The only

criminal law practice in  
Australia that is fully embedded  
within a health service.

Supporting more  
people on opiate  
substitution therapy  
than any other clinic  
in Australia.

\$7.36

saved by the tax payer on each  
\$1 invested in complex/severe  
mental health at First Step.

178

clients supported  
with legal representation,  
advice and referral.



\$4.78

return to the community on each  
\$1 invested on people supported  
with methadone/similar (Gerstein  
1994)

Winner

of three federal  
Department of Health  
contracts in 2018



\$3,300,000

is the average life-time cost  
of an unreformed offender  
(Cohen 1997)



We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, the Yalukit  
Willam clan of the Boon Wurrung people and pay our respects  
to their elders both past and present. We acknowledge and  
uphold their continuing relationship to this land.



First Step are committed to equity irrespective of cultural  
or linguistic background, sexual orientation, gender identity  
(LGBTI+), intersex status, religion or spiritual beliefs,  
socio-economic status, age, or abilities.

## MEET THE BOARD

### BERNARD MCINERNEY CHAIR

Bernard has over 20 years' experience as a senior executive in a global listed group focusing on governance and collaboration. His primary focus as First Step Chair is to guide the business to a sustainable funding model, so that it can continue to help vulnerable Victorians for many years to come.

### PATRICK LAWRENCE CEO

After an early career in the performing arts, Patrick began a transition to the community sector in 2002, working at First Step in a number of roles and at the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre as Director of Humanitarian Services. In 2017, Patrick took on the role of CEO at First Step bringing his passion for social justice and universal comprehensive health care and belief in the resilience of people.

### RICHARD KASPERCZYK PhD FAPS

Passionate about creating mentally healthy workplaces. As an Organisational Psychologist he brings his extensive consulting and management experience to First Step, with a dual focus on supporting its clients' and employees' health and wellbeing. He joined the board after having observed its positive impact on many lives, especially through their participation in employment.

### ANGELA WHEELTON OAM DSJ

20 years in the Corporate Sector of the medical device industry in Australia and Europe, and 10 years' experience in the Philanthropic sector. Angela was motivated to become involved in First Step because she has experienced drug addiction accompanied by extreme mental health issues in her family, and is therefore committed to making a difference in this space.

### MARK WATT AM

Mark is the co-founder, former CEO & development director of Whitelion and the chair of St Kilda Gatehouse. Mark's deep passion and commitment to supporting disadvantaged and at risk young people has been recognised with numerous awards and honours, and he has brought that passion to the First Step board since 2013.

### BARBARA KELLY

Barbara has worked in the alcohol, drug and mental health sectors over a 30-year span. Recently retired as the Program Director of two state-wide services specialising in treatment, clinical research and education, Barbara brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the First Step Board.

### DR IAN KRONBORG AM MBBS FRACP FChAM

Ian has worked in addiction and gastroenterology for 40 years in service delivery, service development, research and teaching in both community and hospital settings. He was attracted to First Step for its innovative treatment ideas to try maximise the opportunity for people to be helped.

### MELISSA HARDHAM

Melissa is a practicing criminal lawyer with extensive experience in social justice and human rights. More recently she has specialised in working with partnerships across health, justice and education. Melissa has joined the First Step board to help reduce cycles of disadvantage, recidivism and poverty.

# FIRSTSTEP

Everybody. Every chance.

Prospectus

April/May 2019

CEO Report



First Step services hub  
January 2019

It is unbearable  
not to be seen,  
not to be heard,  
to have nowhere  
to go and  
nothing to do.

Patrick Lawrence  
First Step, CEO

For 19 years, First Step has been at the forefront of compassionate care for people struggling with drug or alcohol addiction and poor mental health. From the 2000 crisis of heroin overdoses to the present, as we sit poised to participate in the Victorian Royal Commission into Mental Health, First Step has grown to become a national leader in collaborative team care for people with both mental health needs and substance use. We call it Whole-Person Care. Nowhere else in this country can a vulnerable person come to one site, free of charge, and receive addiction medicine specialist, support from a GP, psychologist, mental health nurse, and lawyer, all of whom collaborate in their care. This is unique. This is First Step.

Every year 135,000 Victorians living with severe mental illness will rely on non-NDIS mental health services (Saving Lives Saving Money, Mental Health Victoria, 2018), with the annual Australian tax burden for mental health and substance use disorders estimated at \$45 billion (Mindgardens Neuroscience Network White Paper 2019). As you will see in this prospectus document, First Step is defining the future of team care for complex mental health and addiction in Australia. In reality it is extraordinarily complex: the subtle interplay of teamwork, high-level expertise and compassionate care. In theory, it's very simple:

*Everybody deserves every chance  
to turn their lives around.*

Most of First Step's clients have had to overcome extraordinarily difficult starts in life: homelessness, out of home care, physical or sexual abuse, juvenile incarceration, lack of positive role models, early school leaving and other factors. First Step needs the support of government, philanthropy, and the public to help people overcome those barriers and get people back in work, back in study, out of hospitals and prisons and living with their families. With your help we can support thousands of people to achieve those outcomes.

*"We started First Step,  
really for a simple reason:  
to save lives. Over 20 years  
the community's attitudes to  
mental illness thankfully have  
changed. First Step is leading  
in changing those attitudes."*

Rev Tim Costello,  
Inaugural Chair of First Step

**FIRSTSTEP**  
Addiction • Mental Health

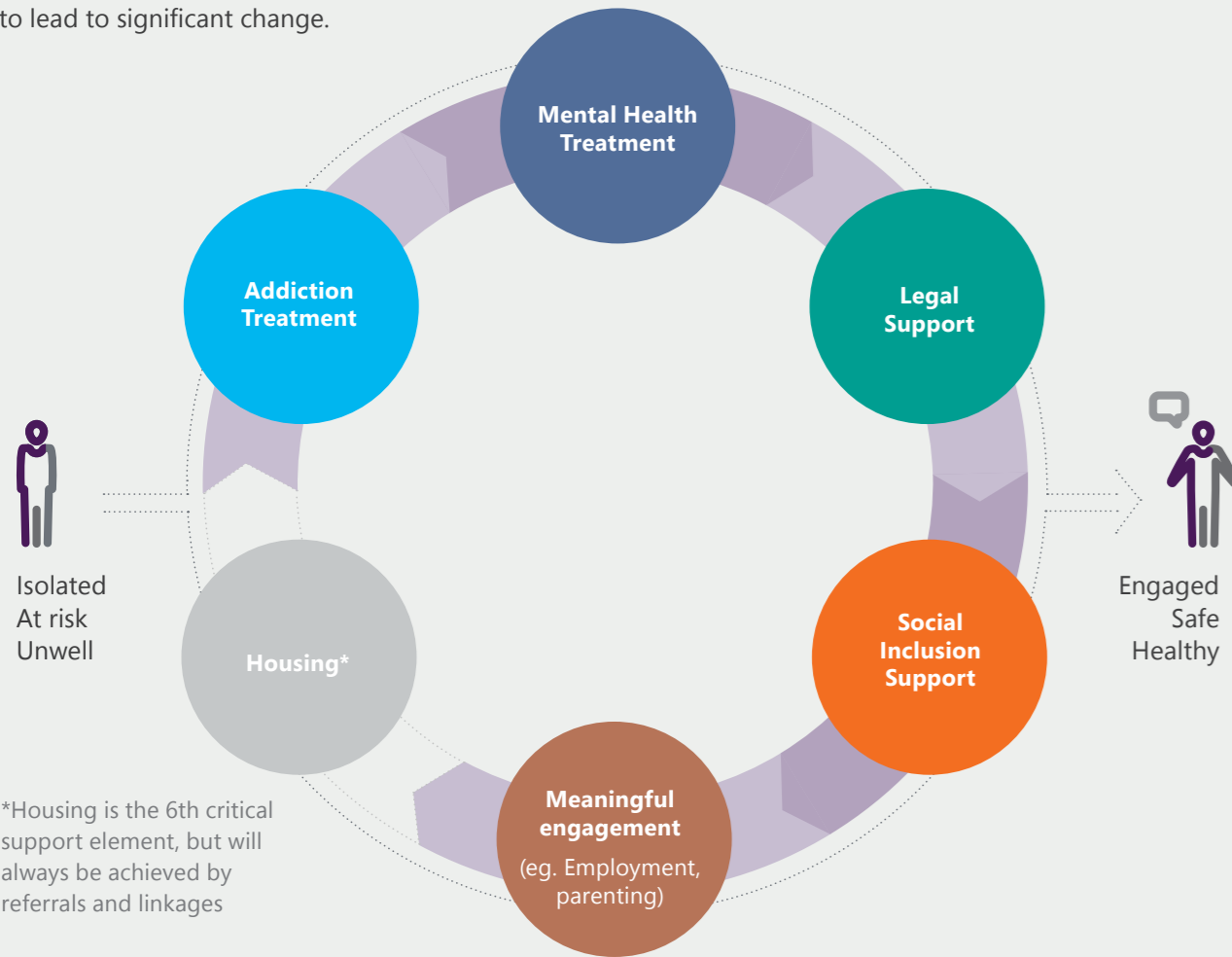
The First Step Program Ltd.  
42 Carlisle Street.  
St Kilda, Victoria 3182

phone: 9537 3177  
email: [info@firststep.org.au](mailto:info@firststep.org.au)  
[firststep.org.au](http://firststep.org.au)

Join our online community:  
Facebook: [/TheFirstStepProgram](https://www.facebook.com/TheFirstStepProgram)  
Twitter: [@FirstStepTweets](https://twitter.com/FirstStepTweets)

# Six Critical Support Elements

Clients with traumatic histories and upbringings face multiple, simultaneous challenges. "The meaning of all addictions could be defined as endeavours at controlling our life experiences with the help of external remedies" - Dr Thomas Horn. The only way to reverse this trend is through the determination and resilience of the individuals themselves, supported by a team addressing the Six Critical Support Elements in a coordinated fashion. If you are completely socially isolated and self-medicating for depression, no amount of psychological therapy alone is going to lead to significant change.



\*Housing is the 6th critical support element, but will always be achieved by referrals and linkages

## Structural Essentials

- No Fee
- No referral required
- Multi-disciplinary team all on one site
- Optimal team size

## Staffing Essentials

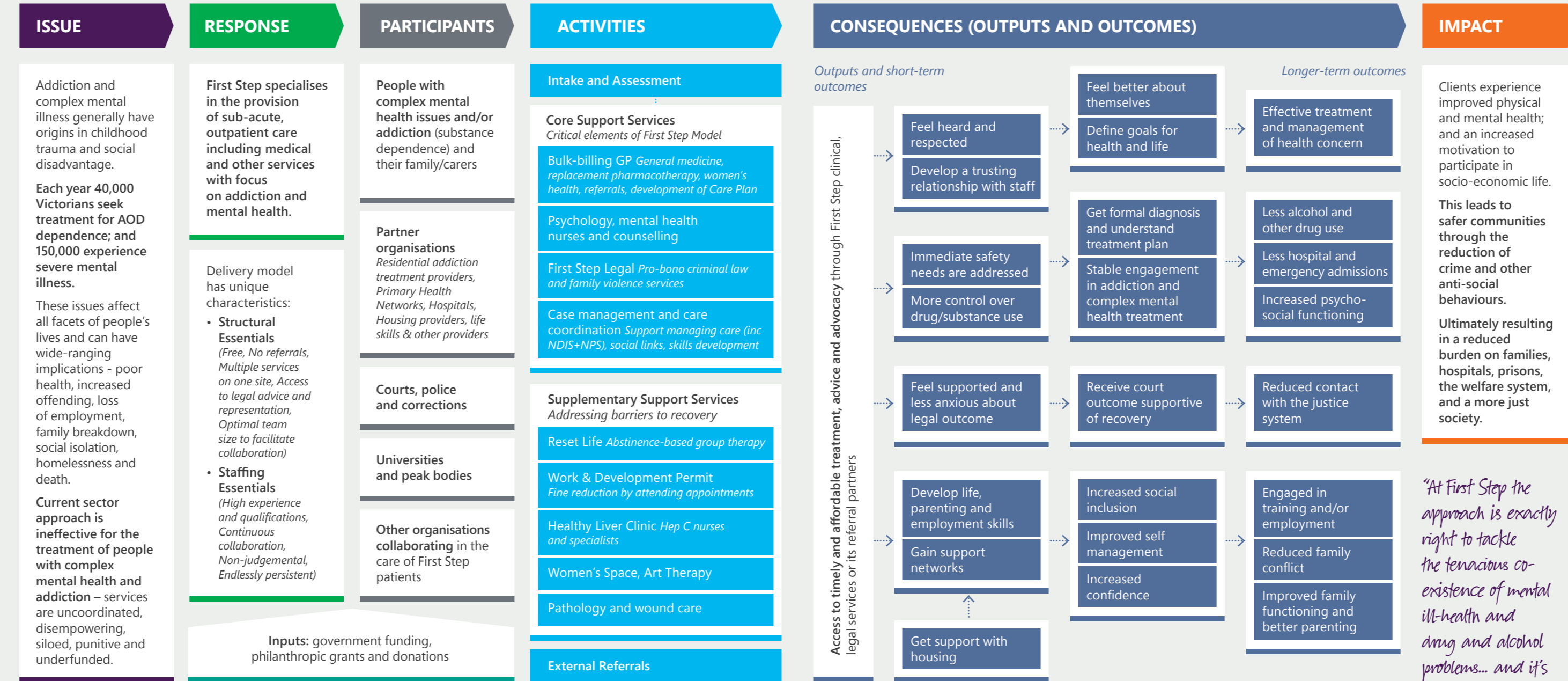
- High level expertise and qualifications
- Ability to establish trust
- Endless persistence
- Collaborative ethos

It is crucial that this client group not be sent all over Melbourne to a number of different services. Multi-disciplinary support on one site results in:

1. **Increased attendance rates**
2. **Collaboration and coordination among the team of clinicians**
3. **The transfer of trust by our clients to the whole care team.**

# Theory of Change

First Step's has sought external validation for its model of Whole-Person Care by completing Theory of Change workshops with Social Ventures Australia. The 'change' being explored is how First Step helps to change the problem, that being the multiple disadvantages suffered by our clients and the lack of support for them.



## Strategic Narrative

**Because:** Addiction and complex mental illness usually have their origins in childhood trauma and can impact all aspects of someone's life...

**We provide:** An accessible, non-judgmental and collaborative team of highly qualified medical, psychological, legal and other practitioners...

**To support:** People to overcome multiple, interdependent barriers to wellness simultaneously and systematically...

**That leads to:** An increased sense of dignity and self-worth, a longer-term engagement in treatment and gradual improvements across all areas of concern...

**And results in:** Better health, increased happiness and a greater ability to participate in all aspects of our society. This leads to safer communities, a reduced burden on families, hospitals, prisons and the welfare system, and a more just society.

Prof. Patrick McGorry, founder of Headspace and Executive Director of Orygen Youth Mental Health

"At First Step the approach is exactly right to tackle the tenacious co-existence of mental ill-health and drug and alcohol problems... and it's having really great results."



# The Future

First Step's unique business model gives us rare insight into the future of the drug and alcohol and mental health sectors. We leverage our growing reputation as a forward thinking and client focused organisation to expand the reach of our services and influence the direction of this type of essential healthcare in Australia.

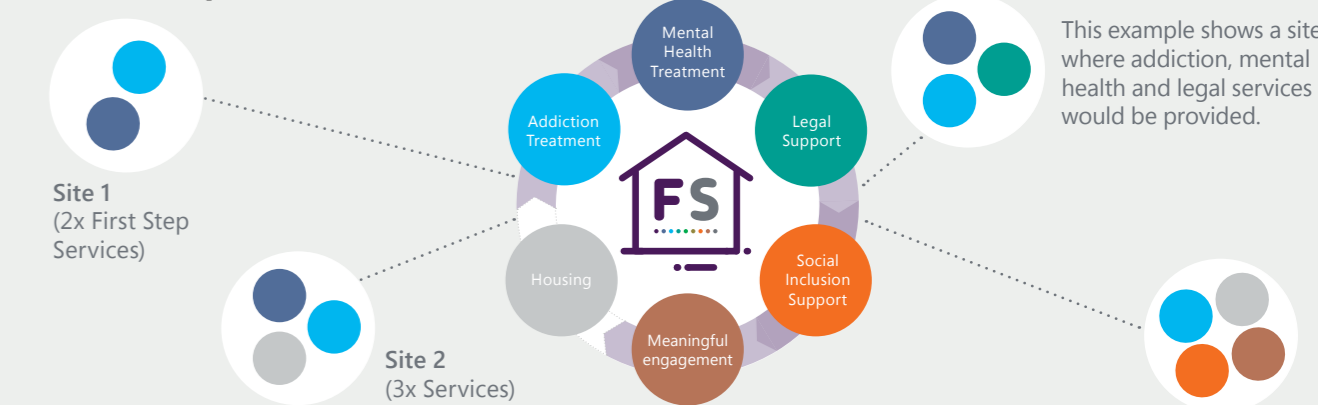
Our Strategic Plan (available on our website) focusses our resources to:

- Consistently provide excellent care
- Help more people more profoundly
- Maintain operational sustainability
- Advocate for compassion for addiction
- Expand the horizons of First Step and the sector
- Diversify income and achieve long-term financial sustainability

Together with Social Ventures Australia, First Step is designing a sustainable and effective Hub and Spoke partnership model. We will collaborate with other organisations to provide our specialist services (e.g. A team including a doctor, a psychologist and a lawyer) on a weekly basis at other venues. The diagram below shows First Step providing various combinations of its services at other venues, tailored to what is needed on each site.

Given the interest already demonstrated by the Victorian Royal Commission into Mental health into new models of team-based care, we will actively promote both Whole-Patient Care and our proposed Hub and Spoke model to the commissioners.

## Hub and Spoke model



## Financial Sustainability

In order to support thousands of vulnerable Victorians every year, First Step requires financial support from a number of sources. Several core components are funded directly by government through ongoing funding streams (such as Medicare funding our doctors), one off grants (First Step Legal is supported by grants from the Department of Justice and Community Safety Victoria) or tenders from the South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (federal health funding). First Step's not-for-profit status, charitable mission and business model make it a bona fide social enterprise, and like most social enterprises and charities philanthropic support is essential. Careful stewardship of grants from philanthropy, major donations from family funds and one-off or monthly contributions from individuals are absolutely essential for First Step to ensure that all our clients, current and future, get every chance to turn their lives around. Good governance ensures that the influence of philanthropy on First Step and its clients is impactful, and represents a sound investment with profound social returns.



**You can contribute to the care of vulnerable people and help us achieve financial sustainability.** Contact our CEO, Patrick Lawrence on 03 9537 3177 or [patrick@firststep.org.au](mailto:patrick@firststep.org.au) to discuss how, or visit [firststep.org.au/donate](http://firststep.org.au/donate) and make a contribution now.