



2024-2025

# **ANNUAL REPORT**



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## President's Report

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**Dr. Peter Freckleton**

**PhD. LLb. Barrister-of-Law. PhD(Paris). DEA (Paris).  
MA (Monash). LLB/BA (Melbourne)**

We have welcomed several new Board members this year.

It is a great pleasure to have such highly credentialed and active people to work with us.

The whole Board have cohered to provide experience which I doubt other groups could match. We have welcomed this expertise and talent to deal with the many policy and advocacy issues that have presented themselves.

PPV has been very active this year, with the difference from earlier years, that we are currently undergoing major challenges with the potentially controversial and highly problematic new Support at Home system rolling out.

Unfortunately, everything to date seems to indicate difficulties that are a very far cry from the spirit and letter of the Royal commission.

So unfortunately, I cannot report on it, save to agree with many older Australians and quite a few providers, that it is problematic and so difficult to interpret. I believe there is an opening for energetic advocacy to support better outcomes for polio survivors.

I and others have been kept on the hop with many Senate inquiries, zoom meetings and urgent lobbying tasks, as we pull out all the stops in trying to limit the negative impact to our members.

In addition, Robyn Abrahams has been indefatigable in representing us through face-to-face meetings in Victoria and interstate. It seems PPV is becoming very well-known in political circles!

We all have reason to be grateful for her dedication and skill. Her astonishing capacity for an ability to work with the system and politicians, it impresses me every time.

## President's Report (Continued)

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**Dr. Peter Freckleton**

**PhD. LLb. Barrister-of-Law. PhD(Paris). DEA (Paris).  
MA (Monash). LLB/BA (Melbourne)**

Deservedly, Robyn was nominated for Australian Senior Australian of the year. It was a very strong candidature, and we all regarded her as the perfect person for the role.

Unfortunately, this year was not to be. We can only hope that the person chosen has at least a fraction of Robyn's merit.

For my own part, I have been running two simultaneous legal challenges against the government's inequitable treatment of polio survivors (and others):

A. A United Nations case, which has been accepted for hearing by the UN Disability Rights committee. The government was supposed to put its defence in by May last year but has requested a series of adjournments. I was chuffed to learn that the South Korean disability group associated with the United Nations has heard of my case. In fact, it funded the lawyer assisting with my case to travel to South Korea and explain the case to them. Let's hope they will be inspired to take action themselves.

B. A case in the Australian Human Rights Tribunal (AHRC) which has been running for four years now. Given the challenges facing the new Support at Home system in particular its capacity to support disability, I am hoping that the AHRC will now come to a decision.

In addition, I have been corresponding with lawyers re the class action calling for repeal of section 22 of the NDIS act, which imposes the inequitable and ageist ban on 65-year-old disabled.

A class action litigation funder has been interested in funding it. Let us hope it gets the green light!

So, overall, an eventful year. We have sown plenty of seeds and look forward to a good crop.

I thank our Board for their splendid work over the year, and wish them, and all our members, a safe and peaceful festive season, a bountiful Christmas, and a healthy, successful New Year.

I am optimistic that it will indeed be a good New Year for polio survivors.

## Vice President's Report

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**Robyn Abrahams**  
**RN. RM. B.Ed.Stud. Cert ICU Nurs.**

2024-2025 has been a very big year, during which we have sought to keep you informed across our quarterly newsletters, bulletins and the new edition of Polio and Ageing related articles. These items are also published on our [website](https://postpoliovictoria.org.au).  
[postpoliovictoria.org.au](https://postpoliovictoria.org.au)

Certainly, a big issue is the revision of PPV's Information Technology System. it will be much easier to navigate and much improved soon.

In terms of advocacy, we are working tirelessly with both Federal and State politicians so they better understand our plight/needs.

We have remained on many committees, representing and speaking on behalf of PPV about the needs that polio survivors have. These activities, which are a core component of our Strategic Direction, will continue into 2026.

As I so often request and ask, please contact us with any questions or issues so that we may be able to assist with or to use in our advocacy work. This is a journey we are all on and we must work together.

I, like Peter, would like to thank our very hard-working patron, Dr Stephen de Graaff. Together we are seeking to achieve our vision and our common goals.

Happy festive season and a safe, healthy, and prosperous 2026.

Robyn Abrahams, Vice President



## Our Mission

Through engagement and collaboration with communities we will advocate for best outcomes and equal and equitable access for people with polio to enable all to thrive

## Our Vision

People and polio, Uniting and thriving

## Our Values

Principles - Inclusion - Acceptance - Equality - Advocacy  
Integrity - Education

## Our Behaviours

**Purpose:** We act with purpose in all our activities.

**Openness:** We are open to all thoughts, ideas, and possibilities to achieve excellence and best practice outcomes for individuals with polio, both young and old.

**Learning:** We will promote and utilise learning in all activities.

**Integrity:** We will conduct all aspects of PPV with Integrity.

**Originality:** We will promote originality in our advocacy and problem solving to achieve best practice outcomes.



## Who we are

Post Polio Victoria Inc (PPV) is a volunteer-managed and staffed advocacy and information group. It was formed in 2011 and has over 300 members, most of whom are people with polio.

PPV is managed by a Board primarily composed of people who are suffering the effects of polio. Under its constitution, two-thirds of the Board, the President, and the Vice President must be people with polio.

PPV's Mission is to support people with polio so they can live as fully in the community as possible. There are an estimated over 40,000 people with polio in Australia. It seeks to do so by:

- Through engagement and collaboration with communities, we will advocate for the best outcomes and equal and equitable access for people with polio to enable all to thrive.
- Advocating on behalf of people with polio to levels of government, health institutions and health providers
- Providing information to people with polio concerning the provision of health services, government support and self-help
- Educating and raising awareness amongst health service providers and government about the health and support needs of people with polio

PPV has Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. While focused on Victoria, we have connected with polio associations worldwide; we are involved with Polio Australia and liaise with our interstate equivalents and polio support groups in Victoria.

## OUR PATRON



**Dr. Stephen de Graaff MBBS. AFRM. (RACP)** is a Past President of the Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine (Royal Australasian College of Physicians). He is Director of Pain Services and Senior Rehabilitation Physician at Epworth Healthcare. He is a Fellow of the AFRM (RACP) and a Founding Member of the Rehabilitation Society of Australia and New Zealand (RMSANZ).

## OUR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT



**President**

**Dr. Peter Freckleton - PhD. LLb. Barrister-of-Law. PhD(Paris). DEA (Paris), MA (Monash). LLB/BA (Melbourne)** also a barrister, expert in legal translation, and frequent letter to the editor author on issues of disability rights. As a Polio Survivor, Peter has made great progress and represented PPV advocating for change to the existing NDIS.



**Vice President**

**Robyn Abrahams - RN. RM. B.Ed.Stud. Cert ICU Nurs.** - Registered critical-care nurse & midwife (retired). National Older Persons Representative, Group member of OPAN. A polio survivor with Post Polio Syndrome, dedicating her time to Polio Survivor Advocacy and the work of PPV



**Treasurer**

**Chrysenta (Chrys) Theobald** - Chrys held a number of positions in the government sector, including DEET, the Family Court & the Department of Immigration. In the private sector, Chrys worked for law firms, group training companies and for the Independent Education Union, where she spent the last 12 years of her working career.



**Member**

**Dr Deb Colville** consumers health governance is Deb's thing. An ophthalmologist, Graduate of Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD)



**Member**

**Geoff Dean** - former President and Treasurer. Geoff has supported PPV financially and always supports PPV in their advocacy education.



**Secretary**

**Jennifer Grace - BA. LLb. LLm.** - an experienced in house legal counsel having worked for many years in not for profit organisations in health and community services. Jenny is also an experienced company secretary.

## OUR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT (Continued)



**Assistant  
Communications**

**Dr. Benny Monheit - MB BS. MPH. FACHAM. Dip RACOG** joined the PPV Board in mid-2025 after working for many years as a doctor in Addiction Medicine and Public Health. He caught polio at the age of one and benefited from tendon surgery on his right leg at the Alfred Hospital 12 years later.



**Assistant  
Secretary**

**Dr. Heather Pisani - RN. RM. D.Ed. M.Ed. B.Ed.St. Cert.Neuro Science. Cert.ICU. FRCNA (Retired)** had a career in the time between the original diagnosis and treatment and the subsequent diagnosis of Late Effects of Polio and Post Polio Syndrome. I am a retired Registered Nurse and Midwife for 45 years specialising in Intensive Care and Neuroscience Nursing



**Member**

**Petra Quinlan-Turner** is a former GP, who has worked in Europe and Australia. She completed a Master of Public Health at the University of Melbourne, where she started collaborating with PPV Inc. on her Master's thesis. She is delighted to continue the work she started with PPV Inc. as a committee member.



**Member**

**Susan Shaab - Susan Lorraine Curzon-Siggers** studied at Melbourne University from 1965-1968. I was granted a Diploma of Social Studies Aug 1969. I was admitted to degree of Bachelor of Arts Diploma in Social Studies at Melbourne University Mar 1970. I qualified for a Diploma of Education at Latrobe University Dec 1985. I was appointed as a Court Mediator of the Family Court in Dec 1998. In 2001, Anglican Aged Care, awarded me a Certificate of Disability & Aged Care, for setting up home care packages in SE Melbourne.



**Communications**

**Dr. Jeff. Stewart - FIEAust, CP Eng, NER.** working in telecommunications, manufacturing, Jeff changed to University teaching. Jeff worked with universities seeking "life experience" examples of living with Polio survivors, as well being available for clinical and community meetings to talk about Polio and PPS.



**Assistant  
Treasurer**

**Anne Wright - BA, Cert Exec Health Leadership** a leader in health care and has had more than 20 years' experience in the public health sector. Whilst working full time, Anne is a committed committee member.



## Amendments to Committee from 2024

Dr. Stephen Graaff	Patron	November 2024
Dr. Peter Freckleton	President	November 2024
Robyn Abrahams	Vice President	November 2024
Chrys Theobald	Treasurer	January 2025
Dr. Deb Colville	Committee Member	Ongoing
Geoff Dean	Committee Member	Ongoing
Jennifer Grace	Secretary	November 2024
Dr. Benny Monheit	Assistant Communications	September 2025
Dr. Heather Pisani	Assistant Secretary	February 2025
Petra Quinlan-Turner	Committee Member	Ongoing
Susan Shaab	Committee Member	Ongoing
Dr. Jeffrey Stewart	Communications	Ongoing
Anne Wright	Assistant Treasurer	Ongoing



## Advocacy, Networks and Affiliations

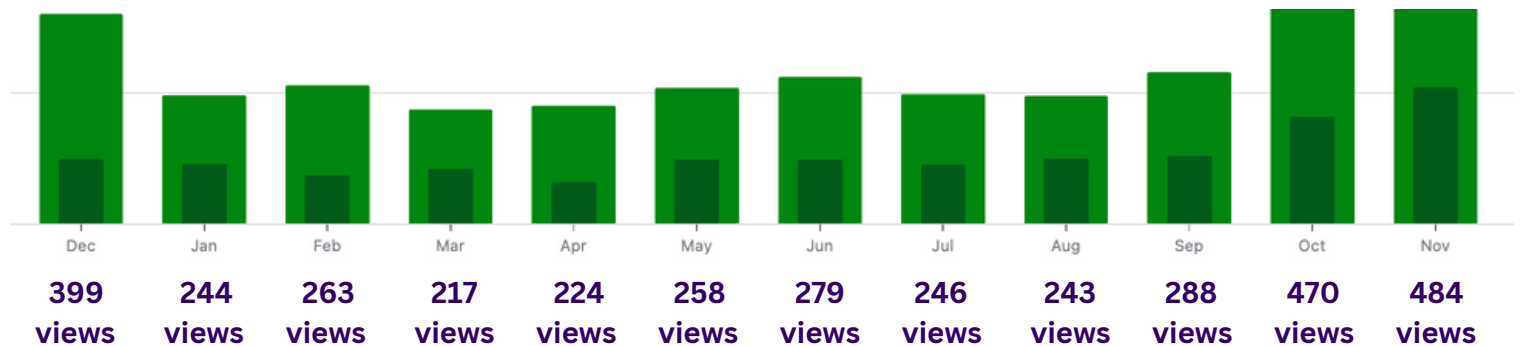
- Our President, Dr. Peter Freckleton, represents Post Polio Victoria (PPV) on the Polio Australia Board. He has been liaising with the PA Board members and formulating arguments for including polio survivors in the NDIS, Class Action, and Human Rights Advocacy.
- Our Patron, Dr Stephen de Graaff has been with us for approximate year and has working tirelessly in our advocacy work.
- Our Vice President, Robyn Abrahams represents PPV by being a member of the Victorian sub-committee of Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG). The focus being ageing well and how this can be assisted with industry affiliations. Robyn is also now on the board of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) and the community advisory group of St Vincent's Public Hospital, Melbourne
- Under the auspice of our Board member, Dr. Heather Pisani we are happy to say that our network meetings with Polio Services Victoria (PSV), Polio Australia (PA) & Polio Network Victoria (PNV) are continuing. This is an important platform for discussion, and working collaboratively is in the interests of all involved.
- Advocacy by many of the Board members continues with Federal, State and Local Government bodies including providing submissions where ever possible to all requested initiatives of Governments.
- The Board is considering the development of sub committees in various disciplines that we deal with to improve outcomes of our issues.
- We are currently working with Federal Department of Health, Disability and Aged regarding the plethora of Polio issues that remain.
- One of our committee members is still working tirelessly in the housing and transport sector to achieve better access and availability for all. We have welcomed new board members
- Board members have attended several conferences over the year for OPAN, AAG, NARI, NAA, PharmAus
- Providing information to PPV members via quarterly newsletters, bulletins and Polio and Ageing Related Articles and updating information on the PPV website
- When seeking advice/advocacy please refer to the following [OPAN National Network Website](#)



## PPV Website Stats

01 Dec 2024 to 30 Nov 2025

- Total number of views - 3.6K
- Most Popular Pages
  - Welcome to PPV-1084 views
  - Our People-231 views
  - Contact Us-173 views
  - Donate to PPV-164 views



## Strategic Plan

Our strategic plan has kept us on track for 2025 and will be updated and circulated to you for perusal early 2026 when completed.

This will enable us to continue to advocate with Government of all levels, universities and researchers across the nation to achieve best practice outcomes for the polio community Victoria and wider. This includes Health, social welfare, housing, transport and equity for all

We would like to take this opportunity, to thank the Board members of PPV for their commitment and ongoing work to the strategic plan.

It remains our vision, mission and values in all things and all activities to ensure equity, dignity, and best practice for ageing polio survivors.

[View our current Strategic Plan here](#)



## Alliances

- Australian Federation of Disability Organisation (AFDO)
- Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG)
- Disability & Disaster Planning (University of Wollongong-Dr Michelle Villenue)
- Dr Catherine Barrett, Director Celebrate Aging Ltd
- Elder Right Advocacy (ERA)
- Federal Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- Latrobe Community Health Service
- Melbourne Ageing Research Collaboration (MARC)
- Monash University (Lived Experience Advisory Group-LEAG)
- National Ageing Research Institute (NARI)
- Neurological Alliance Association (NAA)
- Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)
- Other Universities: Sydney, UOQ, Swinburne, La Trobe
- People With Disability Australia (PWDA)
- Peninsula Health/MEPacs
- Polio Australia
- Polio Canada
- Polio Network Victoria (PNV)
- Polio Services Victoria (PSV)
- Rotary
- St Vincents Public Hospital-Melbourne
- University of Melbourne
- Victoria Department of Health

# Treasurer's Report

## Audited Statement - Income and Expenditure Statement

01 July 2024 - 30 June 2025

### Income and Expenditure Statement

Post Polio Victoria Inc  
For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
<b>Income</b>		
Donations	2,566	7,453
Grants Received	14,500	-
Interest Income	1,199	302
Other Revenue	1,483	-
Prizes	-	27,000
Trust Distributions	652	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>20,401</b>	<b>34,755</b>
<b>Gross Surplus</b>	<b>20,401</b>	<b>34,755</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Administration Costs	5,921	12,475
Advertising	-	3,134
Bank Fees	7	-
Bookkeeping Expenses	303	-
Conference Expenses	1,984	5,416
Donations	93	651
Postage	10	12
Printing & Stationery	-	217
Subscriptions	2,188	641
Telephone & Internet	-	331
Travel and Accommodation	4,558	6,981
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>15,063</b>	<b>29,858</b>
<b>Current Year Surplus/ (Deficit) Before Income Tax Adjustments</b>	<b>5,337</b>	<b>4,897</b>
<b>Current Year Surplus/(Deficit) Before Income Tax</b>	<b>5,337</b>	<b>4,897</b>
<b>Net Current Year Surplus After Income Tax</b>	<b>5,337</b>	<b>4,897</b>

# Treasurer's Report (Continued)

## Audited Statement – Assets and Liabilities Statement

### Assets and Liabilities Statement

Post Polio Victoria Inc  
As at 30 June 2025

	NOTES	30 JUNE 2025	30 JUNE 2024
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents		49,824	44,487
Total Current Assets		49,824	44,487
Total Assets		49,824	44,487
<b>Net Assets</b>			
		49,824	44,487
<b>Member's Funds</b>			
Capital Reserve		49,824	44,487
Total Member's Funds		49,824	44,487

Please refer to 2025 Financial Statements - Post Polio Victoria Inc auditor report on our [website](#).

## Highlights from 2024 / 2025



Post Polio Victoria (PPV) proudly announced their new  
**PATRON**  
Dr. Stephen de Graaff



Robyn Abrahams, Vice President,  
PPV attended the PharmAus  
Conference in Canberra-July 2025  
**Photo: Mr Mark Butler, Minister for  
Health, Disability and Ageing**



Robyn Abrahams and friend at  
Neurological Alliance Australia  
conference in Canberra, July 2025



Robyn Abrahams, Parliament House in  
July 2025

Robyn Abrahams, Vice President, PPV attended the  
Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)  
Conference in Canberra-July 2025



On 8th September 2025 it was our very great pleasure to meet with Matt Gregg, Member for Deakin at his offices in Mitcham. We presented to Matt the access and equity issues associated with the NDIS and My Aged Care, the inappropriateness of the 65 year NDIS age cut off, given that for most of us our disability began, to some degree, in childhood and the comparative inequity of the relevant funding model/s.

**Photo: Robyn Abrahams-Vice President PPV, Matt Gregg-Member for Deakin,  
Dr. Heather Pisani at Matt's offices in Mitcham**

## Highlights from 2024 / 2025 (Continued)

During August, PPV Board members Robyn Abrahams-Vice President, Dr Heather Pisani and Dr Jeff Stewart, along with Polio Australia representative Michael Jackson took part in an online session hosted by Latrobe University involving Second year students studying to become qualified as allied health clinicians in the fields of Orthotics and Prosthetics.



It was a very great pleasure to be invited to Peninsula Health's award ceremony celebrating the staff who have exemplified the values of the health service by their actions.

In advocacy terms. We were busy speaking to politicians endlessly and trying to get our message across.

**Photo: Matt Gregg candidate for Deakin, Robyn Abrahams-Vice President PPV, Senator Penny Wong**



PPV represented at the Mooney Valley Council Disability Week Forum. Peter Freckleton-President and Robyn Abrahams-Vice President attended. Peter spoke along with other attendees with other disabilities about local issues related to the complexities of the law and disability, and moreover the care and safety needs particularly of the physically disabled.

On 15th of March 2025, Dr. Heather Pisani representing PPV was invited to be the community representative on the judging panel for the Lions Club Youth of the Year regional event at Box Hill.

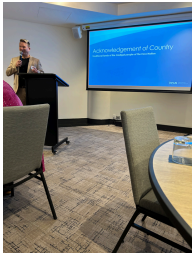


Robyn Abrahams attended the National Aged Research Institute (NARI) meeting discussing research opportunities and successes



Ladybirds are good luck

## Highlights from 2024 / 2025 (Continued)



Robyn Abrahams attended OPAN's Restrictive Practices Forum in Sydney together with many others including Rosemary Kayess, Australia's Human Rights Disability Commissioner and Craig Gear, OPAN's CEO. To discuss and plan for the issue of restrictive practices in Aged Care



The PPV Board at their annual Christmas event took the opportunity to formally welcome to our organisation, Dr. Stephen de Graaff as our Patron. We welcome Stephen's extensive expertise in Late Effects of Polio and Post Polio Syndrome and look forward to his support for our ongoing advocacy.





## Contact Us



**0492 817 784**



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**[www.postpoliovictoria.org.au](http://www.postpoliovictoria.org.au)**

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Chrys Theobald

**Treasurer**

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Post Polio Victoria is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).