

“ The Male Hug understands why men talking about their problems is so important. And the first step to improving mental health. ”

Professor Patrick McGorry AO



A SERVICE IN DEMAND

Advocating professional men's positive mental health and wellbeing through education, early stage mentoring and support.



Our mission is simply to encourage men to talk.

Our vision is to facilitate and encourage through the practice of open and safe dialogue, that it may create better men.

In addition to raising awareness, we provide practical support by giving men the opportunity to talk in safe and friendly environments that are free of judgement.

Real people. Real conversations.

Our advocacy and initiatives are focused on preventative measures.

We believe that prevention and education is a far better approach, and reduces the cost and need for crisis management services.

- **80% of suicides in Australia are men.**
- **45% of working Australians will have mental health struggles at some stage.**
- **Men are 72% less likely to talk about their mental health struggles than women.**

A Hug for All



Women can be the biggest advocates in endorsing and encouraging men to talk. It is therefore just as important for women to join us and understand why men don't talk and to help men understand the benefit of talking.



How we began

The Male Hug was founded by Tony Rabah, a Melbourne Accountant and Business Advisor, some 10 years ago.

When Tony realised that he was spending more time listening to his clients' personal issues and giving them the opportunity to talk about what was really important in their lives. His boardroom was always a safe and friendly space for a chat.

Tony's journey as both an accountant and SME owner during the 2008 GFC provided him with many personal challenges. Talking to those closest to him provided relief and a pathway to navigate through difficult times.

It followed that Tony selected a group of volunteer experts to support what has become his passion - to improve the mental health of professional men.



Our focus

Our focus on professional men led to the need to address a large and increasing audience in a time of rapid change and pandemic.

This important group grew to involve the women who support them, their clients and their individual business networks.

We have found we are relevant to most men, after all **“There comes a time when every man needs a hug”**.

“The Male Hug aims to empower professional men to deal with these challenging times.

We promote honest and open dialogue amongst men to equip them to deal with their problems regardless of how big or small.”

Tony Rabah, CEO and Founder



Royal Commission into
Victoria's Mental Health System

The Mental Health Crisis

Governments, State and Federal, have recognised our mental health resources are stretched.

In fact, it is said that “the mental health system is broken” – a conclusion supported by the recent Royal Commission. The crisis management approach has its limitations – early-stage education and prevention is pivotal.

This is also agreed by professional service providers.

Governments have responded by increasing funding for additional resources.

Importantly, the need to fund and resource our mental health system enjoys Bipartisan support.



“Professional male’s demographic is the toughest group to crack.”

Professor Patrick McGorry AO



The contribution we make

The Male Hug engages in the early stages of the need for mental health services.

We work to prevent issues growing to the stage where they require the formal mental health system. We know when to refer. We seek to collaborate with relevant partners.

Our role is to get men talking about what is important to them.

What is often difficult to disclose or discuss.

We know men are culturally conditioned to be stoic, to contain their thought.

“We aim to relieve the pressure cooker before things reach breaking point.”

Women have found discussions with friends provides an easier pathway.

Importantly, Male hesitancy to be open to discussion, is probably increased by the disciplines imposed by professions and corporate life.

The Male Hug engages with men in ways that promotes discussion, that shines light on problems in an informal way.

We draw on the Australian tradition of mateship to bring issues forward.

We have developed disciplined approaches. The demand for our services is increasing in these stressful times.

**Our Buddy system is a proven success.
We have experienced a 500% increase in
calls to our Buddy Program since March 2020.**



We bring two advantages to Government

Our early engagement works to reduce the demand on the established mental health system.

Our engagement with professional males improves the health and productivity of a diverse group that contributes so much to the “services dominant” Victorian economy.

When the clients of these professional men are also considered, we have significant links into the essential small and medium businesses too.

In summary

- 1. We work to reduce the demand for and cost of crisis management mental health services.**
- 2. We improve the health and effectiveness of a key economic driver of the professional service providers, their SME client networks and the women who support them.**

“This delivers a positive ROI to Government.”

Our expert Service Delivery Team



Tony Rabah - CEO and Founder

Tony is the founder and CEO of The Male Hug. An Accountant, Business Advisor and Principal of Financial Consultancy. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



Tony Schibeci - Director Media & Comms

Tony directs our media and communications. He has an extensive career in media, radio and is the voice of the MCG. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)

Matt Newlands - Buddy Program Director

Matt is our Buddy Program Director and Trainer. A former SA Police officer, Speaker and Mental Health Counsellor. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



Tamzine Walshe - Marketing and Social Strategy

Tamzine guides our Marketing and Social communications strategy and is the co-founder of Conscious Conversations. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



David May - Director of Programs

David drives our Education Program Development and is the key writer for our program material. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



Jeff Schenker- Media and Content Producer

Jeff contributes his wide experience in media content production to our team. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)

Keith Banks BM GAICD, VA - Senior Buddy

Keith is a highly decorated veteran, ex QLD Police Officer and a best selling author. PTSD survivor and a key leader of our Buddy support team. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



Wayne Psaila - Brand and Social Manager

Wayne directs and produces our creative vision and brand, managing our digital and social platforms. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



Pat Kelly - Senior Buddy

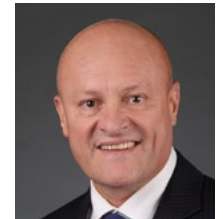
Senior Sergeant WA Police Force and experienced counsellor.



Jonathan Hay - Ambassador

Jonathan is our Male Hug Ambassador and part of our Buddy team. A Former All-Australian AFL Footballer. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)

The people who support us



From L to R: Andrew Conway FIPA, Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP, Hon. David Hodgett MP, Prof. Patrick McGorry AO, Shane Jacobson, Andrew Gaze, Matthew Richardson



We were featured on Channel Nine News

[WATCH VIDEO >>](#)





The importance of **#TALKTOBER**

Our annual October event has been an important springboard for increasing the awareness of The Male Hug.

Talktober encourages men and their supporters to engage with mates and colleagues, making a call each day for 30 days.

It has enabled us to engage with a growing audience and raise funds to support the development of our Buddy program.

Talktober impact engagement will be measured by a team from Monash University.

WATCH VIDEOS >>





Our annual program

The demand for Male Hug services has led to the creation of a dedicated annual program.

Each month we encourage men to grab a mate, walk the block and chat.

Next April we will hold a month of corporate events with our Partners and Professional Associations.

In November we launch our **1800 4 Buddy Number** to increase access to our services.



All year round Corporate Training and Workshops

Weekly educational workshops and training for organisations and corporations



Tony Rabah - Chair

Founder and CEO of The Male Hug, Accountant, Business Advisor and Principal of Financial Consultancy.

> [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



Dr Aidan Burrell MBBS DDU FCICM PhD - Board Member

Intensivist, Head of General ICU at Alfred Hospital, Monash University ANZ Intensive Care Research Center.



Dr Mark Pizzacalla - Board Member

BDO Senior Partner, Advisor to Australian Board of Taxation. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



David May - Board Member

Executive Recruitment. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



Colin Robinson - Director and Company Secretary

Property Development Capital Specialist, Governance.

> [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



Keith Banks BM GAICD, VA - Board Member

Decorated veteran ex QLD Police and best selling Author.

> [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)



Ian R Herdman FAICD - Company Director

Strategic Advisor to the CEO and Members of the Service Delivery Team. > [LINKEDIN PROFILE](#)

Our Governance and Compliance Board

The Male Hug was incorporated as a Not-for-Profit entity in 2019.

The appointment of a Board of Directors followed.

The Board holds Quarterly meetings.

The Male Hug meets all compliance and reporting requirements and has appointed external auditors, accountants and legal counsel.

The Board reviews the annual plan and the management team's performance.

Conclusion:

The Male Hug has the team and governance regime to manage its growth and transition to a core of full-time resources.



Summary

The Male Hug provides early-stage mental health support for men who are notoriously reluctant to seek it. Our Buddy system is a proven success. Demand for our services has increased in these stressful times.

We are now partnering with corporate employers and profession groups where members/clients need someone to talk through important personal issues.

We have found we appeal beyond these groups and face the need to grow.

Importantly, The Male Hug receives bipartisan support.

We now want to explore a relationship with State and Federal Governments to facilitate The Male Hug's move from a volunteer service to evolve and build our service delivery resources.



Funding Request

We are seeking to partner with Governments to ensure the continuity of the delivery of vital services to professional men who **Patrick McGorry AO has said “are a hard group to crack”**.

It is sometimes difficult to transition from an entity based on voluntary support. TMH has the governance and compliance team in place to manage this evolution.

We plan to begin by funding a core team of specialists who will ensure we extend our reach into professional and corporate Australia from our Melbourne base.

In these times the demand for a Buddy who listens, is growing and widespread.

We seek the support of the Victorian and Federal Governments to ensure we make this necessary transition.

Our plan is to seek equal funding for our corporate partners who are increasingly concerned about the health of their teams.

The path ahead is to meet the growing demand for our services.

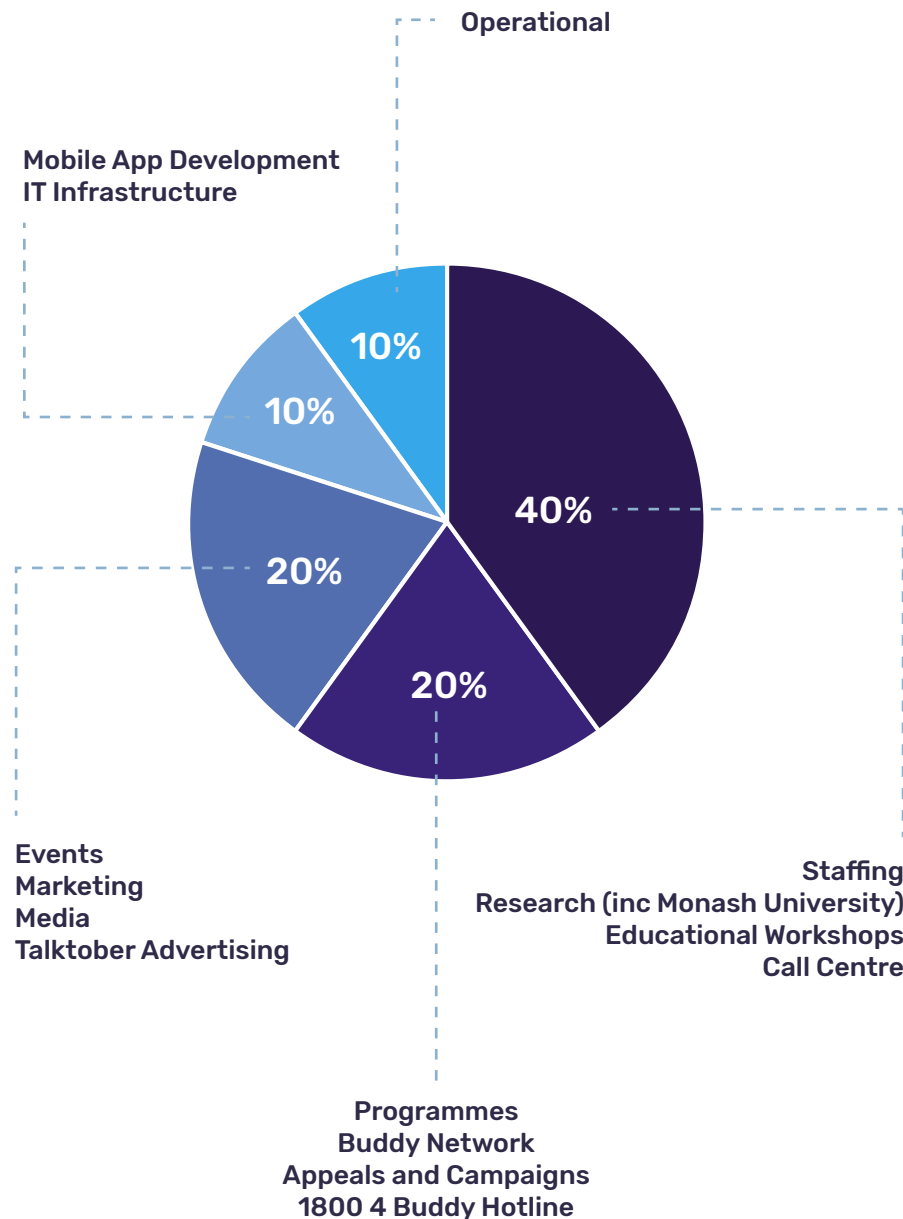
How we will deploy the Funds

To build our Buddy network

Building our core of full-time services

- Appointment of an Events and Corporate Partner manager to increase our corporate involvement and funding
- A communications manager to extend our communications services
- A call centre facility
- And a dedicated Mobile App.

This will enable The Male Hug services to extend to a national network.



We know a mentally healthy man is a better manager, a better employee, a better father, a better partner; simply a better man.



THEMALEHUG.COM.AU

8 November 2021

To whom it may concern

LETTER OF SUPPORT: THE MALE HUG

I am writing in support of The Male Hug's funding application:

The Male Hug is an initiative that seeks to raise the awareness of men's mental health, and promote the open dialogue of this often sensitive issue.

Mental health is an issue that is becoming more prevalent in our society, but continues to find degrees of negative stigma associated with it, particularly amongst men.

The Male Hug provides support & encouragement for men to talk in a safe and friendly environment that is without fear of reprisal or judgement. If successful in their application they will be able to expand existing programs, such as the "1800 4 Buddy" which is a 24hour 7 day a week hotline

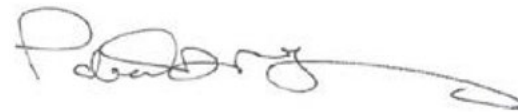
for those needing someone to talk to. They will be able to provide educational workshops as well as increase their Research in conjunction with Monash University.

These are important projects that once completed will be vital community resources, that will be the catalyst for meaningful and purposeful conversation in regards to Men's mental health and the importance of developing community resilience.

Thank you for your consideration with regard to this application.

With kind regards

Yours Sincerely



Professor Patrick McGorry AO

MD BS PHD FRCP FRANZCP FAA FASSA FAHMS

Executive Director



What we seek

It is our intention to seek equal funding from three sources.

From the Victorian Government, the Federal Government and our Corporate Partners and, Professional Service firms and their Associations, where we have already found strong support.

These funds will enable the transition of The Male Hug into an entity capable of delivering the growing demand for mental health services from professional men, the women and families they support and the small and medium sized businesses they serve. This is a large group.

Our plan is to become financially self-sufficient over time.

In the meantime, we seek government support and in return, we will reduce the demand on the established mental health system and improve the health and performance of a group which generates significant value for the community and for governments.

Headquartered in Melbourne, we believe The Male Hug can play a positive role in Victoria's recovery from the effects of the pandemic.

We seek a grant of \$1M. Each year for a period of 5 years.

We will seek similar funding from the Commonwealth Government.

And with our resourced team in place, seek similar support from the corporate groups and their members we serve.

The Male Hug will report as agreed against performance targets and milestones that are set by the funding agreements.

The Male Hug Board, CEO and service delivery team are committed to ensuring this plan is successfully delivered.

Programme showcase

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Workshop presentation for Law Institute of Victoria.

[DOWNLOAD >>](#)

WEBINARS

A Call for Help - Supporting Small Business during the Pandemic. A webinar with an expert panel including The Hon. Jaala Pulford MP and Barbara Cullen discussing various pathways for assistance during the Panedmic for small business in Victoria.

[WATCH VIDEO >>](#)

Live webinar featuring Tony Rabah, Matthew Richardson, Paul Roos and John Toomey. Hosted by Conscious Conversations.

[WATCH VIDEO >>](#)

#TALKTOBER

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[RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION >>](#)

BUDDY SUPPORT NETWORK

Our Let's Chat Buddy Programme guide.

[DOWNLOAD >>](#)

