



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
South East QLD



Ronald McDonald House Charities South East Queensland

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2023

Caring for families with children who are ill or injured.

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We acknowledge the Turrbal, Yuggera and Yugambeh people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land we are gathered and acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay respects to the First Nations people, the cultures and the elders past, present and emerging.

Chair's message

Mr Tim Banks

As a McDonald's Licensee and after recently completing a four year term as RMHC Australia Director, I've had the incredible opportunity to see the magic that goes on behind the scenes at Ronald McDonald House Charities. Taking on the role of Chair at Ronald McDonald House Charities South East Queensland has been a true honour and I am extremely proud of everything we have accomplished in the last 12 months.

Firstly, I would like to thank my fellow Directors for their dedication to achieving our mission. I would particularly like to acknowledge Stephen Moore OAM who stepped down as Director and Chair of the Finance Committee and Mark Robertson who stepped down as a Director last year. Both Stephen and Mark have been fantastic champions of RMHC SEQ and will always remain connected to our mission. A special mention also goes to Michael Power for his significant contribution and governance over the years, particularly as Chair during the COVID-19 pandemic. His work with the South East Queensland Chapter is something to be inspired by and I thank Michael for his leadership and assistance since joining the board.

McHappy Day 2023 was a resounding success, raising a record breaking \$6.4 million that will be used to fund various projects across the RMHC chapters in Australia. I would also like to acknowledge the \$1.14 million raised by McDonald's Licensees in Queensland and the Northern Territory. This money goes directly to RMHC SEQ and RMHC NA to help them support families with ill or injured children.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated employees and volunteers, supporters, donors and corporate partners who help drive and support an organisation that makes a real difference to families in need. RMHC SEQ will continue to adapt and evolve to ensure we are supporting as many families with ill or injured children as possible – to provide them with the best gift of all, the gift of togetherness.



CEO's message

Emma Thompson

At the close of 2023, I am incredibly grateful to reflect on what an enormous 12 months it has been for RMHC SEQ. We saw more families than ever walk through our doors in 2023 and it has been wonderful to connect with our community whether it's in our Houses, Family Rooms or at corporate and fundraising events.

We've seen a significant increase in demand at our Houses, with all of them being at full occupancy on many occasions. As a result, we have made plans to expand our Herston House by four rooms in 2024, and once we have secured funding, our next vital project will be to complete the final level of our South Brisbane House.

We have continued to work seamlessly with our hospital partners to maintain essential support to families with ill and injured children. Excitingly, we have secured funding to support the development of a First Nations Family Lounge inside the Queensland Children's Hospital and additional funding to refurbish some areas of the Special Care Nursery inside the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

In 2023, we marked 10 years of our Family Rooms which operate inside the Gold Coast University Hospital and have renewed our lease agreement for a further 10 years. Our Family Rooms are welcoming spaces where families can take time out of the clinical environment of the wards to rest, reconnect and relax.

We also trialled the Making Milestones program which supports pre-school aged children whose developmental milestones have been impacted due to an illness or injury. As a fabulous addition to our existing Learning Program, our greatest achievement has been the positive feedback we've received from participating families, hospital and allied health employees.

I would like to take the time to thank the Queensland Government for announcing a 16% increase in the subsidy available to support accommodation which was announced in the June 2023 Budget.

We are not immune to the Cost of Living Crisis and whilst we work hard to reduce operational costs, increased CPI and the high demand for our services, means that our expenses have increased significantly. We understand that every family and business in SEQ are feeling the same strain which is why we are more grateful than ever for the amazing community and corporate support we receive.

Thank you to our dedicated team of employees and volunteers who support our families 24/7, 365 days a year, and to our broader team of incredibly loyal and generous supporters who make sure we are able to continue to work to achieve our mission.



OUR IMPACT

in 2023

3 Ronald McDonald HOUSES

Our purpose

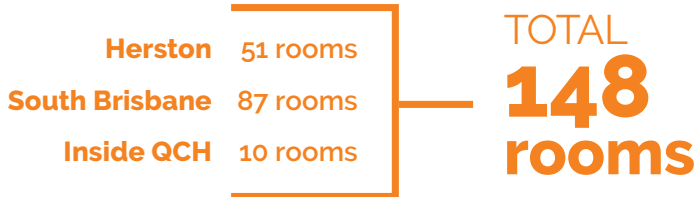
Caring for families with children who are ill or injured.

Our vision

A world where every family has what they need to ensure the best health outcomes for their children.

Our mission

We provide essential services that remove barriers, strengthen families, and promote healing when children need healthcare.



3,208 families

stayed in our Houses

7.25 nights

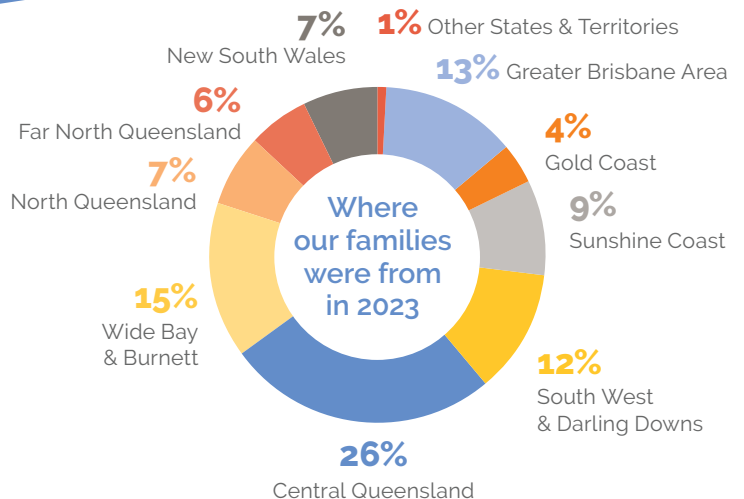
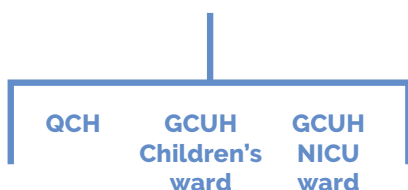
was the **average length of stay** across our 3 Houses

780 nights

was the **longest continuous stay** by a family

3 Ronald McDonald FAMILY ROOMS

12,442 visitors
to our Family Rooms



Right:
Turner family at South
Brisbane House during
Christmas.

Below:
Fletcher Turner.



Caring for families with ill or injured children

TURNER FAMILY – AYR

For the Turner family, Ronald McDonald House South Brisbane became a home-away-from-home during some of the toughest months of their lives.

At not even two years old, little Fletcher was showing signs of irritability, shaky eyes and loss of mobility. The doctors in Townsville soon diagnosed Fletcher with Opsoclonus-myooclonus-ataxia syndrome (OMAS) – a rare autoimmune disorder of the nervous system. OMAS presented in children under five is most common when a neuroblastoma is present and an MRI of his brain and spine soon revealed a tumour on his kidney.

Fletcher and his mum, Ashton, were flown to Brisbane by the Royal Flying Doctors the next day, where they were introduced to Ronald McDonald House Charities South East Queensland (RMHC SEQ). Throughout their stay, Fletcher underwent four months of chemotherapy, immunosuppressant therapy to assist with the OMAS and surgery to remove the tumour on his kidney.

Ashton said that they are forever grateful to the team who were welcoming and accommodating from the beginning, and that the House's location in conjunction to the Queensland Children's Hospital was absolutely invaluable.

"During our time at RMHC SEQ, everyone started to become family. In a time when you're stressed, overwhelmed and control has been taken away from you, it's nice to come back to safe space, surrounded by such positive and helpful people. The support we've received throughout this journey has driven us a lot to give back to this incredible organisation."

After 132 consecutive nights, the Turners were finally able to go home however their journey is far from over. Fletcher has since had a regression with the OMAS and will need to go between Townsville and Brisbane for the foreseeable future. No matter what though, they know they will always have a place to stay at RMHC SEQ.



OUR PROGRAMS

We provide essential programs that remove barriers, strengthen families and promote healing when children need healthcare.

Our programs across South East Queensland include:



Ronald McDonald House program



Ronald McDonald Family Rooms



The Ronald McDonald Learning Program



We strive to achieve the best outcomes for families by reducing the impact of their child's illness or injury.

Ronald McDonald House Program

Ronald McDonald Houses provide a home-away-from-home for ill or injured children and their families. Accommodation is offered to parents with ill or injured children who need to travel for their child's treatment, or for mothers going through high-risk pregnancies.

RMHC SEQ manages three Ronald McDonald Houses: Ronald McDonald House Herston: adjacent to the Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital, Ronald McDonald House South Brisbane, directly opposite the Queensland Children's Hospital and Mater Mothers' Hospital, and the Ronald McDonald House at Queensland Children's Hospital, specifically to support patients of the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit.

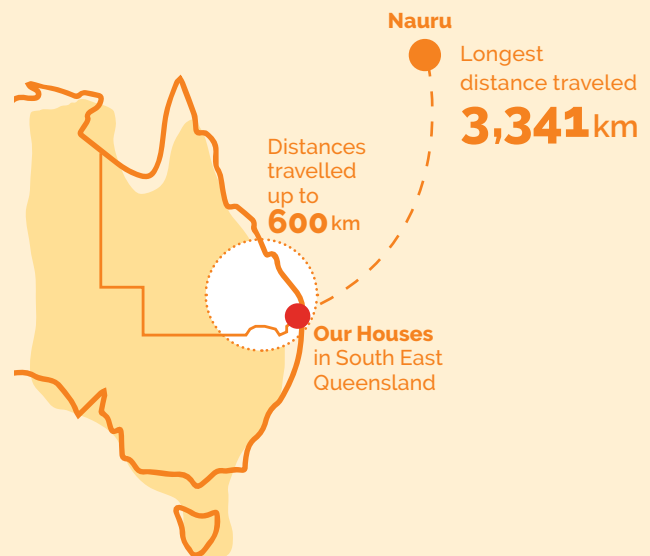
In 2023, 3,208 families called one of our Ronald McDonald Houses home. While families stay with us for 7.5 days on average, some families have needed our accommodation for much longer. The longest consecutive stay to date is 780 days with the family arriving in 2021 and finally being able to go home in 2023.

Families often travel as far as 600 kilometres and many need to come multiple times through the duration of their child's treatment. In 2023, the longest distance from home was 3,341 km for a family from Nauru.

In 2023...

3,208 families stayed in our Houses
for a total of **44,569 room nights**

House	Families
South Brisbane House	1959
Herston House	844
Queensland Children's Hospital	405



Ronald McDonald Family Rooms

Ronald McDonald Family Rooms are welcoming spaces where families can take time out from the clinical environment of the wards, have a tea or coffee or find a quiet space for a much-needed nap. Our three Family Rooms in South East Queensland are located in the Gold Coast University Hospital and the Queensland Children's Hospital.

In 2023...

12,442 visitors took a break
in one of our **3 family rooms**





Make A Meal and Bake Off program

After a long and emotional day at the hospital, parents and carers rarely have the time, funds, or energy to cook a fresh and healthy dinner. This program provides the families staying at the South Brisbane House or Herston House with a delicious hot meal, three nights each week. Families find comfort in hearing laughter in the kitchen and enjoy a dinner that's been served with a smile.

In addition to the regular Make A Meal and Bake Off activities, RMHC SEQ teamed up with The Mini Farm Project to create the CEO Winter Challenge during winter 2023, with The Mini Farm Project providing fresh produce free of charge for the challenge. Prominent business leaders from across South East Queensland were invited to take up the challenge of producing 300 portions of nutritious soup each week for the families staying at Ronald McDonald Houses in South East Queensland over the winter months.

In 2023...



In 2024, the Make a Meal and Bake Off program will be updated and relaunched as **Meals from the Heart** and **Baking a difference**. More information is available on the RMHC SEQ website.



Ronald McDonald Learning program

The Ronald McDonald Learning Program assists school-aged children with illness and injury to catch up on missed education following treatment and recovery. Educational support includes therapy sessions and one-on-one tutorials with experienced teachers tailored to students' individual needs.

In 2023, 34 registered tutors supported 148 students whose education had been disrupted by illness or injury.



Making Milestones

In 2023, RMHC SEQ introduced a pilot program called Making Milestones to help children aged between 3 and 5 whose development has been impacted due to treatment for a chronic health condition. The program focuses on developing the skills needed by the child to begin schooling, as well as assisting parents or carers to support their child's further development.

Making Milestones helps fill the gap for many families who are not eligible for National Disability Insurance Scheme funding or just need help navigating the often traumatic journey of childhood illness. The program is unique in that it also provides support for siblings in the age range.

Families are offered approximately 12 sessions with a selected service including an initial specialist assessment

and progress report at completion. The types of therapy offered include music therapy, play therapy, E-Kindy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, brain balance therapy, sensory and social educator, and kid's physio.

At a glance...

Music therapy was the most common service used

12 - 14 was the average number of sessions accessed per child

33 children used 17 different services

Kids club and holiday activities

Kids club gives children the chance to participate in arts and crafts classes, movie nights, story time and other fun activities. Activities are run weekly with extra sessions throughout the school holidays. The program is supported by volunteers from Somerville House, Corinda State High School, Young Engineers, Monto State School, Krispy Kreme and Camp Quality Puppets. Little Change Creators kindly donated reusable colouring mats.

Almost 500 children took part in Kids Club activities in 2023; 298 children attended the 53 regular Kids Club sessions and 195 children attended 20 special in-house holiday program sessions.



EMPOWERING OUR PEOPLE

In 2023, Ronald McDonald House Charities South East Queensland (RMHC SEQ) experienced profound growth and impact, driven by our unwavering commitment to empowering our dedicated employees and volunteers. Their collective efforts have been instrumental in supporting families facing challenging times and have truly embodied our mission.

Employee and Volunteer Engagement

Empowering our people begins with recognising the heart of our organisation. With 65 employees working across our four locations in various roles, both directly supporting our mission and ensuring behind-the-scenes sustainability, RMHC SEQ stands strong. In addition, our incredible team of 180 volunteers showcased unparalleled dedication, contributing

over 18,500 hours in 2023. Their impact was not just in numbers but in the lives they touched—nearly 15,000 interactions directly supporting families, 12,000 meals prepared, 1,750 drinks served for parents, orientation tours for over 1,000 families, volunteer-run activities engaging 1,144 children, and over 550 loads of laundry completed.





Strengthening Foundations

In our commitment to continuous improvement, several foundational enhancements were made during the reporting year. The development of a robust Workplace, Health and Safety Management system laid the groundwork for increased safety and risk capabilities. Further, an investment in advanced systems for recruitment, on-boarding, compliance, learning, and performance management for both employees and volunteers is poised to be fully embedded in 2024. These improvements ensure our people are equipped for success, allowing them to focus wholeheartedly on supporting our mission.

Recognising and Celebrating Achievements

Empowerment thrives in a culture of recognition and celebration. The introduction of quarterly Sparkling Successes events has become a cornerstone in acknowledging birthdays, anniversaries, mission merit recipients, annual year awards, and departmental achievements. These events not only celebrate individual and collective successes but also foster a sense of belonging and shared accomplishment.

Fostering Growth and Learning

Empowering our people involves investing in their growth and development. In 2023, RMHC SEQ provided a diverse array of 41 learning and development sessions, attracting 386 individual attendees and totalling an impressive 1646 formal learning hours. This commitment to continuous learning ensures that our employees and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to excel in their roles.

Looking Ahead – Focus for 2024

As we reflect on the accomplishments of 2023, our focus for the New Year is clear – embedding systems to better support our people and their safety, as well as growing our volunteer program to serve both existing families and to support new and expanding programs. We are dedicated to ensuring that the empowerment of our people remains at the forefront of our mission, allowing us to make an even greater impact on the lives of those we serve.

Get Involved

If you share our passion for supporting families and are interested in contributing as a volunteer, whether in our houses or family rooms, or by offering corporate skills behind the scenes, please reach out to us at volunteering.SEQ@rmhc.org.au. Together, we continue to empower our people and make a meaningful difference in the lives of families in need.



OUR COMMUNITY HELPS US MAKE A DIFFERENCE...

We greatly value the generosity of everyone in the South East Queensland community who hosted or participated in a fundraising activity for us over the past year. RMHC SEQ relies on the financial support of the entire community to help us support thousands of families each year. Without these generous contributions, we would be unable to keep our doors open to families in need 365 days a year.

Below are just some of the highlights from 2023.

Red Boot Hoot

We celebrated with 800 of our closest friends to celebrate the tenth year of the Red Boot Hoot raising more than \$638,000. Over the night we danced the evening away with live entertainment, enjoyed a delicious meal and beverages while raising much needed funds for sick kids. Thanks to the generous support of our dedicated donors, supporters, prize donors, corporate sponsors and McDonald's licensees in helping us celebrate this epic milestone.



Red Boot Hoot with MCs Sofie Formica and Sam Thaiday

Beasy Family



Transurban Charity Lunch

RMHC SEQ has been proud partners of Transurban since 2012. As part of the annual Bridge to Brisbane event, the Transurban Charity Lunch was held at Howard Smith Wharves and attended by over 300 guests. This was a great way to connect with corporate partners and bring them closer to the cause. Through live and silent auctions, raffles and 'Pick Up the Tab', the event raised an incredible **\$417,200**.

The Beasy family shared their medical journey and how RMHC SEQ made such an impact on their lives. This was a great opportunity for one of our families to be part of a major fundraising activity and to see how amazing our supporters truly are.



Left: David Schramm and Adele Watkins with RMHC SEQ CEO Emma Thompson.

Below: Sunshine Coast Marathon Volunteers.



Level 10 Riverfire Function

As part of the fundraising incentives from the Transurban Charity Lunch, companies bid for the prize of hosting a function on the Ronald McDonald House South Brisbane rooftop for the annual Riverfire event.

In 2023, 40 guests from Schramm Group and families from the House got to experience this spectacular event from one of the best vantage points along the Brisbane River. Having our families attend the function was a special reminder to Schramm Group of how important it is to support our cause, but to also provide an enjoyable experience for those going through some of the toughest times of their lives.

Schramm Group have long term supporters of RMHC SEQ, with support ranging from golf days, major sponsorship at the Transurban Charity Lunch and more recently including RMHC SEQ branding on a race car that is touring Australia as part of the V8 Supercars competition. We are incredibly grateful to Schramm Group's ongoing support.

Sunshine Coast Marathon

The Sunshine Coast Marathon is one of the most-loved running festivals in Australia, raising vital funds for charity and community groups. With a distance to suit everyone, this community-focused, world-class athletic event caters to all ages and abilities. In 2023, RMHC SEQ was named a major beneficiary of the event and more than **\$35,000** was raised to provide essential accommodation and programs to families with ill and injured children. We are so grateful to our fundraisers and congratulate everyone involved for such an incredible achievement.



MCDONALD'S LICENSEE FUNDING

McDonald's is RMHC's Mission Partner and we are forever grateful for their generosity and ongoing support. McDonald's Corporate, Licensees and employees across the state continue to be active and passionate supporters of the families we care for at RMHC SEQ. One of the best examples of this support is seen through McHappy Day, where McDonald's restaurants around the country come together to raise vital funds for RMHC.

In 2023, Licensees located in our region donated **\$1.018 million**. These donations were received through high profile activities such as McHappy Day, the Red Boot Hoot, the Adopt a Door Program or a percentage of the proceeds collected through the sales of large coffees at McDonald's restaurants.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

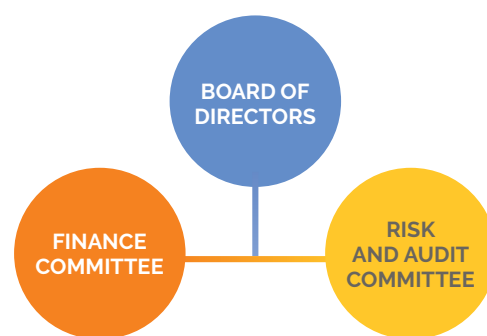
Thank you to our RMHC SEQ corporate partners:

- McDonald's
- Transurban
- Lactalis
- Clive Berghofer Group
- Drakes Supermarkets
- Atlas Events
- Brisbane Marathon Festival
- Schwarz Excavations
- The Interior Fitout Association
- Schramm Group
- FDC Fitout and Construction
- Alroe Constructions
- Mi Electric
- Venita
- Big W
- Channel 7
- Channel 9
- Channel 10
- Southern Cross Austereo
- Bishopp Outdoor Advertising
- Sunny Queen Eggs
- Aryzta
- Turosi
- Coates
- Coca-Cola Amatil

Trusts & Foundations

- Gambling Community Benefit Fund
- James Frizelle Charitable Foundation

OUR BOARD AND GOVERNANCE



RMHC SEQ is supported by a dedicated Board, with members bringing a broad range of experience across many different sectors.

The RMHC SEQ board is supported by a Finance Committee and a Risk and Audit Committee.

The Finance Committee meets nine times a year to provide governance around budget setting and long term financial planning for the organisation.

The Risk and Audit Committee meets six times a year, and provides governance in relation to the annual audit process and risk management, including compliance and policy development.

Board Directors 2023 attendance record

Name	Number of Meetings Directors N		Finance Committee		Risk and Audit Committee	
	Held (i)	Attended	Held (i)	Attended	Held (i)	Attended
Mr Tim Banks – Chair	3	3	5	1	3	3
Dr Amanda Dines –Deputy Chair	6	4				
Mr Michael Power	6	6	5	3		
Mr Mark McCormack	6	6			6	6
Mr Mick McLoughlin	6	6				
Ms Leone Costigan	6	5			6	5
Ms Suzanne Cadigan	6	5				
Mr Troy Collings	6	3				
Ms Tara Parnell	3	3	9	8		
Dr Lucy Cooke	6	5			6	2

(i) Number of meetings held during the time the Director held office or was a Member of the Committee during the year.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mr Tim Banks (Chair)
 Dr Amanda Dines (Deputy Chair)
 Mr Michael Power
 (Immediate Past Chair)
 Mr Mark McCormack
 Mr Mick McLoughlin
 Ms Leone Costigan
 Ms Suzanne Cadigan
 Mr Troy Collings
 Ms Tara Parnell
 Dr Lucy Cooke

COMPANY SECRETARY

Ms Michele Galagher

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Ms Tara Parnell (Committee Chair)
 Mr Tim Banks
 Mr Michael Power
 Mr Marc Benson
 Mr Peter MacGinley
 Mr Michael Robertson

RISK AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Mr Mark McCormack
 (Committee Chair)
 Tim Banks
 Ms Leone Costigan
 Dr Lucy Cooke

OUR FINANCIALS IN 2023

Overview

Delivering on our mission requires long-term financial sustainability and we are pleased to report that our activities in 2023 have contributed to strengthening our financial position.

RMHC SEQ will report a surplus of \$815,000 for 2023. This represents a significant improvement on the prior year where a deficit of \$1,085,000 was recorded. This improved result is attributed to both growth in revenue and diligent management of costs at the same level as 2022, without compromise to the quality of services provided.

Revenue for RMHC SEQ is generated from three major sources. First and foremost is the generous support from the Queensland public through donations and support of our various fundraising activities. Then there is the support from our partnership with McDonald's and licensees with ongoing sponsorships, fundraising activities and contributions supporting our daily operations. Finally, guests in our accommodation facilities are subsidised per night by the State Government allowing us to provide accommodation and our other services free of charge to families in a time of need.

Our revenue for 2023 was \$10,621,000 which is an increase on the \$8,848,000 reported revenue for 2022.

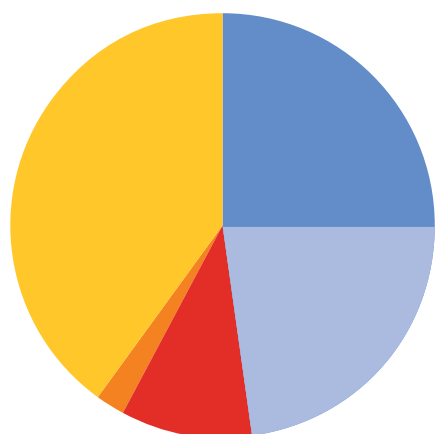
Revenue source	2023	2022
Donation and bequest revenue	\$3,043,000	\$2,237,000
Sponsorships and events	\$2,148,000	\$2,432,000
McDonald's	\$1,118,000	\$955,000
Accommodation subsidy from state governments	\$4,293,000	\$3,015,000

The increase in accommodation subsidies reflects both significantly increased occupancy at our Houses in Herston and South Brisbane (as a result of renewed consulting and marketing work across the Health network to raise awareness of the facilities and services we provide), and the July 2023 increase in the Queensland Government subsidy for supported families from \$60 to \$70 per night. This was the first increase in subsidy for many years and comes as a result of ongoing advocacy and lobbying by RMHC SEQ and other charitable organisations providing services in this space.

The ongoing support of our many supporters across the community, corporate organisations and our McDonalds partnership saw an increase in revenue despite difficult economic conditions prevailing for both families and businesses.

Total expenditure (including depreciation) by RMHC SEQ in 2023 was \$9,806,000 which is in line with total expenditure of \$9,933,000 in 2022. This reflects the conscious effort of the Team at RMHC SEQ to manage and rationalise expenditure whilst continuing to maintain the quality of services.

We will continue our review and rationalisation of expenses going forward, mindful of the fact that our facilities are ageing and will likely require increased maintenance and refurbishment in the near future.



Snapshot of revenue

Accommodation subsidies	40%
Fundraising revenue - Donations and Bequests	28%
Fundraising revenue - Partnerships, Sponsorships and Subsidies	20%
McDonald's partnership contributions	10%
Other Income	2%

Income and Expenditure – Programs

	Programs	Fundraising	Corporate	Total
Revenue				
Subsidies	5,372,139	-	-	5,372,138
Fundraising	-	5,052,623	-	5,052,623
Other Revenue	70,317	-	125,898	196,215
	5,442,456	5,052,623	125,898	10,620,977
Expenditure				
Administration Expenses	38,505	-	614,143	652,648
Program Expenses	2,172,551	399,086	29,875	2,601,512
Fundraising Expenses	-	666,040	-	666,040
Employee Expenses	2,591,431	669,320	1,161,192	4,421,943
	4,802,487	1,734,446	1,805,210	8,342,143
Operating Profit/(Loss)	639,969	3,318,177	(1,679,312)	2,278,834
Depreciation	1,439,221	-	24,776	1,463,997
Net Profit/(Loss)	(799,252)	3,318,177	(1,704,088)	814,837

Audited Financial Statements

Our annual external audit takes place in March each year and full audited financials will be available on [the ACNC website](#) shortly after our Annual General meeting that is scheduled in May.

<https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities/79211004-39af-e811-a963-000d3ad244fd/profile>



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
South East QLD

Ronald McDonald House Charities South East Queensland

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