



2020 – 2023

Disability Action Plan

Promoting inclusion and participation



Content

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Why do we need this plan?

Alignment with Strategic Planning

Policy and Legislation

Development of the plan

Governance

Our three priorities

Cohuna District Hospitals Disability Action Plan has been developed with reference to the Victorian Disability Act 2006, the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Victorian State Disability Plan 2013 – 2016

and outlines strategies and identifies actions, in accordance with the requirements of these Acts and Plan in meeting the needs of patients, community and staff with disabilities. Other associated acts include;

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Victorian Disability Amendment Act 2012
- WHO International Classification of Functioning Disability and Health 2001

This Disability Action Plan will be in place until the introduction of the Department of Health's Equity Standards, and will be reviewed and aligned when appropriate.





Message from the Chief Executive



We are pleased to introduce Cohuna District Hospitals 2020-2023 Disability Action Plan. Cohuna District Hospital is committed to ensuring that people with a disability have equal access to services and resources within the community.

The development and implementation of a Disability Action Plan demonstrates this commitment and complies with Victorian and Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation. Through the Disability Action Plan, Cohuna District Hospital will ensure that, within our services and workplace, there is no discrimination against people with a disability, and that their interests are considered in our future planning. Cohuna District Hospitals Disability Action Plan has been developed in consultation with our consumers and staff. The Plan recognises the complex and variable needs of people with disabilities.

The Plan commits our organisation to continue to identify and address the barriers that impact on the ability of our patients, carers and staff to be fully included and participate in their community. We will achieve this by improving: access to services; the provision of care in our facilities; and the employment opportunities for people with a disability.

We look forward to achieving our shared vision of enablement with the ongoing support of our community and staff.

Benjamin Maw
CEO

Cohuna District Hospital



About disability

One in five Victorians has a disability. Disability results from the interaction between medical condition; bodily function; and the social and physical environment. Disability can:

- Occur at any point in a person's life
- Be sudden
- Be episodic
- Be overt or hidden
- Involve more than one impairment
- Affect other people, often family members

Why do we need a Disability Action Plan?

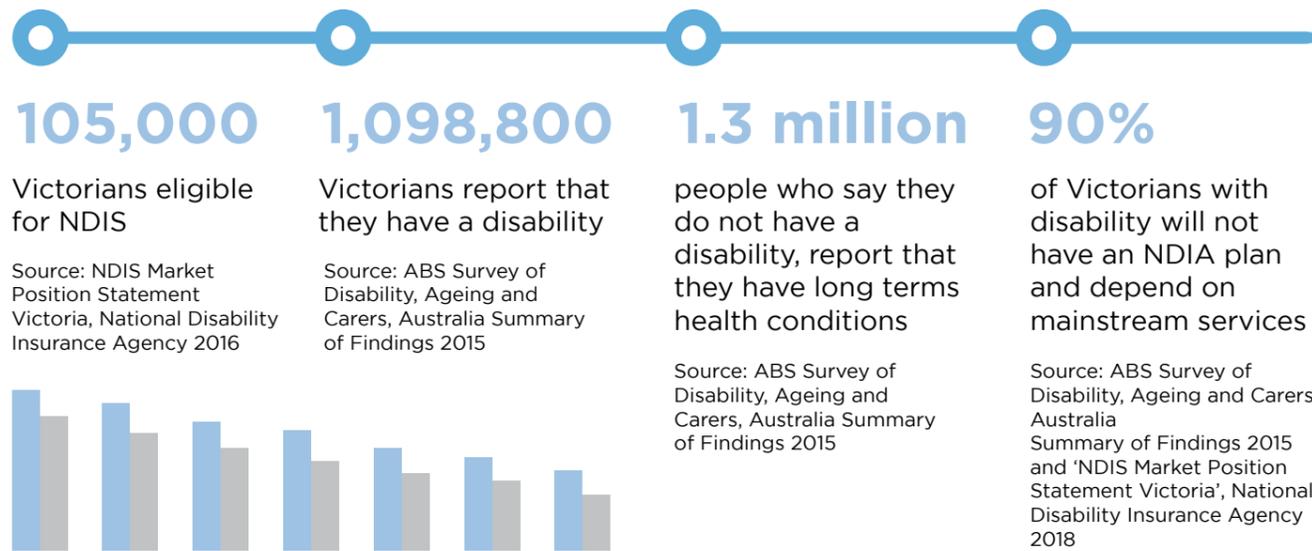
A Disability Action Plan assists organisations to devise and implement actions to ensure that their facilities, services and programs do not exclude people with a disability, or treat them less favourably than other people.

Under the Disability Act 2006 it is a legal requirement for public sector bodies to develop Disability Action Plans and to report on them in their annual report. The Disability Action Plan will help Cohuna District Hospital to meet the diverse needs of people with a disability who use, visit or work within our organisation.



Disability in Victoria

How does the Disability Action Plan align with Cohuna District Hospital's Strategic Plan?



The three Key Goals of the Disability Action Plan fit broadly within Cohuna District Hospitals Strategic Plans five Strategic Priorities:

- **Our Services:** Increase availability of Primary Care Services.
- **Our Workforce:** Create a workforce culture that includes staff in decision making, supports open communication and includes consumers.
- **Our Infrastructure:** To have efficient and compliant infrastructure that will support service capability.
- **Our Partnerships:** Establish strategic partnerships to enhance services available to our community.
- **Our Role:** To have an efficient and sustainable health service.

Aim

The purpose of this Disability Action Plan is to ensure that all members of our community with a disability, both consumers and staff, have equal access to: services; care that meets their needs; our facilities and equipment; and employment, in the case of staff.

In Victoria there are **239,100** Primary carers
497,900 people who are carers, but not the primary carer

Source: ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia Summary of Findings 2015



Disability is not always visible in victoria

85%

of people with disability do not use a mobility aid and

73%

of people with disability do not use a communication aid

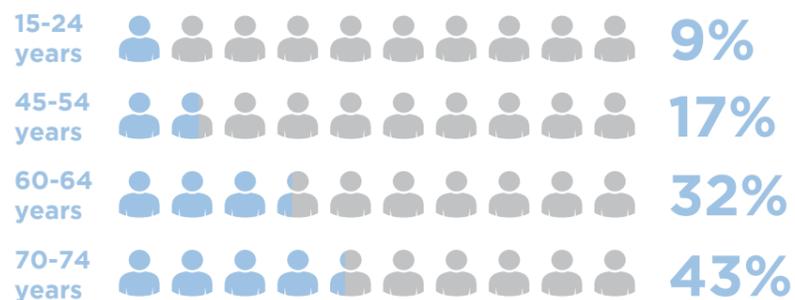
Source: ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia Summary of Findings 2015



The objectives of the Plan are to:

- » make it easier for people with a disability to use services available to all
- » foster and create a healthcare service where people with a disability are afforded the same opportunities as the broader community
- » promote and increase awareness about the specific rights and needs of people with disabilities and their carers to Cohuna District Hospitals employees and the broader community
- » focus on practical, achievable and deliverable initiatives to improve equitable accessibility to the physical and visual environment
- » enhance communication and reduce barriers, including attitudes that may discourage people with a disability from using or providing the organisation's services
- » achieve tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against people with a disability
- » reduce barriers to people with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment
- » meet legislative requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Act 2006 in all areas of Cohuna District Hospitals service delivery and in its role as a responsible employer.

Disability increases with age



Source: ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia Summary of Findings 2015

Development of the plan

The Cohuna District Hospital CEO took responsibility for overseeing the development and implementation of the Cohuna District Hospital Disability Action Plan.

The Partnering With Consumers Committee reviewed and endorsed the Disability Action Plan. The committee members are comprised of consumers from a diverse group of backgrounds including disability and cultural diversity, and staff who are champions for the priority areas of the Disability Action Plan and work with consumers and people with disabilities.

The Community Engagement Officer undertook the external consultation phase with key consumer agencies and individuals to assist in the development and review of the Disability Action Plan.

There are three main priority areas that form the basis of this plan:

1 The provision of appropriate care.

This includes the key role that carers play, the need for specific care plans, as well as other specific care needs such as timing of appointments and planning for discharge.

2 Accessing the physical environment and the provision of specific equipment.

This includes communication tools to enable our patients to maintain independence and participate in their care.

3 Promoting and actively supporting employment for people with a disability.

The Disability Action Plan has been developed by the CEO with consultation and input into the deliverables and monitoring to occur through the Executive Operations meeting and Partnering With Consumers Committee.

Performance indicators have been determined for each action and will be reviewed regularly over the life of the plan. The CEO will be responsible for providing an annual update on this plan to the Executive Operations meeting, Partnering With Consumers Committee and the Board of Management. A review of the Disability Action Plan to identify achievements and to update the Plan will be conducted annually starting in July 2020.

Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Disability Action Plan will be through the Executive Operations meeting quarterly, playing a key role in overseeing the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Disability Action Plan.

- All actions identified in the Disability Action Plan are included in the Operational Quality and Risk Management plans of relevant Cohuna District Hospital services / departments.
- All services / departments will provide reports about their progress to their Executive.
- The Executive is responsible for making sure all actions are monitored and reported.
- Cohuna District Hospital reports annually on the plan through the Cohuna District Hospital Quality Account and Annual Report.

Our Three Priorities:

1. Provision of Care.
2. Physical access and equipment
3. Promoting employment of people with a disability

Provision of Care

OUTCOME: Improved care for people with disabilities



OBJECTIVE

Cohuna District Hospital policies, procedures and guidelines affecting people with disabilities will be current and appropriate.

Cohuna District Hospital policies, procedures and guidelines for consumers and carers will be current and appropriate.

ACTIONS

The Cohuna District Hospital Inclusion Policy is developed and disseminated to staff. This includes participation in care, communication and discharge planning.

The Cohuna District Hospital Consumer Participation Policy is further developed and outlines how carers should be involved in the provision of care for a person with a disability. This will include participation in care, communication and discharge planning.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- All Cohuna District Hospital staff can access the Inclusion Policy
- Information from the Disability Action Plan and relevant policies are incorporated into consumer participation and staff training programs

- All Cohuna District Hospital staff can access the Consumer Participation Policy
- Information from the Consumer Participation Policy is incorporated into staff training programs
- Evidence in patient care plans demonstrates that carers are involved in patient care and care planning
- There is a reduced number of complaints from patients and carers of patients with a disability

Provision of care continued...

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p>Cohuna District Hospital actively engages in ongoing consultation with disability advocacy groups in its catchment to identify and improve services for patients with disabilities and for their carers.</p>	<p>Develop stronger partnerships and engagement with disability advocacy groups within the Cohuna District Hospital catchment ie: Northern District Community Health, Gannawarra Shire Council, Gannawarra Local Agency Meeting (GLAM), Carers Support Group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is at least one formal consumer consultation session attended by Cohuna District Hospital staff annually with representatives from local disability advocacy groups • There are a number of identifiable improvements made as a result of consumer feedback • Feedback from patients and carers states that services are accessible for people with disabilities
<p>Patient information is available in a variety of formats to ensure all patients, irrespective of their ability, have access to this information about their care needs.</p>	<p>Work with a group of consumers to identify current gaps in the availability of patient information in alternative formats and develop a plan to address these gaps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of patient information brochures available in alternative formats such as on line and in plain English. • Reference material is available for staff creating or those reviewing consumer information to promote accessibility to best practice in reviewing consumer literature.
<p>Opportunities to enhance support and access to services identified through consumer feedback.</p>	<p>Proactively support initiatives to encourage service provision in the region in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paediatric Services (including speech pathology) • Overnight Respite • Psychiatric services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified services will be available within the region • Feedback from consumers will indicate satisfaction with additional service enhancement.



Physical access and equipment

OUTCOME:
 People with a disability will have improved physical access to buildings, facilities, and the equipment that they need where health services and programs are provided

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p>Feedback from stakeholders forms part of the stakeholder engagement process for new service and building development projects at Cohuna District Hospital</p>	<p>The Partnering With Consumers committee is consulted as a key stakeholder and provides feedback for all new service and building development projects. Master Planning forums and feedback opportunities will be proactively provided to all identified stakeholders and community members for feedback.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new service and building development projects presented to the Partnering With Consumers Committee for review and feedback
<p>New buildings comply with legislation and Australian standards, including the Building Code of Australia.</p>	<p>Keep abreast of updates to relevant legislation, regulation and standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New buildings comply with relevant legislation and standards • Non-compliance issues are addressed
<p>The accessibility of services for consumers with a disability is reviewed annually.</p>	<p>Consumers with a disability and their carers are engaged to assist with auditing various access points and services for patients with disabilities across Cohuna District Hospital, including signage, annually.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of actions taken to address gaps identified • Audits of buildings to include Accessibility reviews
<p>Ensure there are adequate amounts of appropriate patient equipment to maintain as high an independence level as possible for consumers with a disability when they are in hospital, in residential aged care and within our community based programs.</p>	<p>Identify key equipment items that should be available for consumers use whilst in hospital. Create a list of shared equipment and its location which is available for all staff to use. Provide appropriate examination, assessment and treatment equipment/resources eg Hi-Lo examination beds, appropriate seating ie hoists and sensory aids in treatment areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital equipment plans for clinical areas includes a list of required equipment. • Annual Capital Budget reflective of input from the Disability Action Plan



Physical access and equipment continued...

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p>Provide a television service with closed captions for patients who are hearing impaired.</p> <p>Provide appropriate support to hearing impaired consumers to enable them to access services across Cohuna District Hospital.</p>	<p>Review the feasibility of installing closed caption capability on all Cohuna District Hospital patient bedside televisions.</p> <p>Investigate opportunities and seek funding to implement personal hearing systems and counter hearing systems in key access areas across Cohuna District Hospital.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of televisions with closed caption capability functioning• Hearing systems are implemented across Cohuna District Hospital.• Master Plans and Refurbishments show consideration towards personal hearing system implementation.
<p>Providing Accessible Health Information</p>	<p>Cohuna District Hospital provides the community and its consumers with a large amount of specific health information. We provide information in a form that is accessible to people with a disability to make sure they are able to take full advantage of it to achieve positive health outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify accessibility features and alternative formats available for website and written material and include in website redesign• Support individual way-finding needs through appropriate signage, concierge services and environmental enhancements• Enhance available education and literature regarding support services within our community



IDEAS TO THINK ABOUT

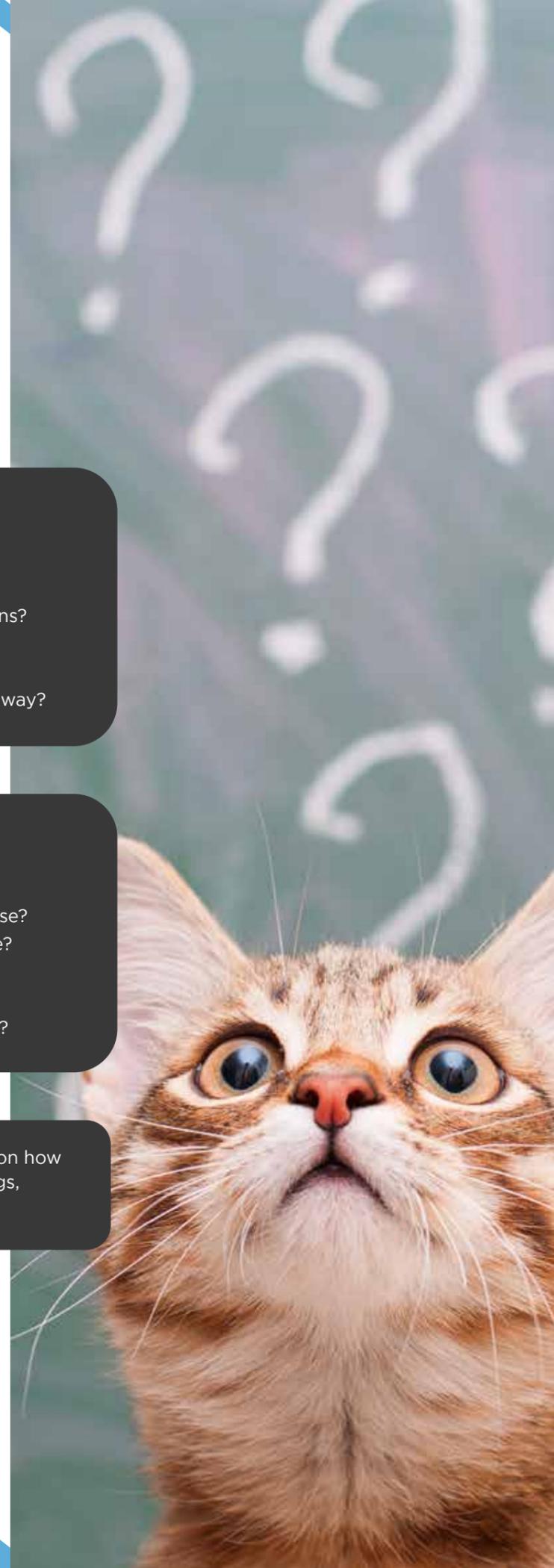
When you enter a building do you consider:

- How hard it is to push the door?
- The type of door handle used?
- If there is enough space to turn a wheelchair?
- The colours or letters used on information signs?
- The height of the reception desk?
- Ability to reach the phone?
- If signage is adequate for people to find their way?

When you produce written information do you consider:

- The complexity of the language you use?
- How much jargon or professional speak you use?
- How many acronyms or abbreviations you use?
- The font size?
- The colour of the print and the paper?
- Using relevant pictures to help understanding?

All of these things can have a significant impact on how well a person with a disability can access buildings, services and information.



Promoting employment of people with a disability

OUTCOME:
Improved equity and equal opportunity for people with disabilities in Cohuna District Hospitals workforce

OBJECTIVE

ACTIONS

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Workplace strategies are in place to provide Equal Employment Opportunities for employees with a disability.

There is an ongoing focus on training for staff on mental health and wellbeing.

Recruitment and Selection Policy is available for hiring managers that includes specific information about Equal Employment Opportunities and specifies supports available to employ people with a disability.

As part of the Human Resource Plan, Human Resource and Managerial staff across the organisation work to identify roles and opportunities that could be filled by groups under-represented in the current workforce such as those with a disability.

The existing workforce who have a current or new disability are supported to keep working at Cohuna District Hospital.

There is an ongoing focus on early intervention for staff who are currently unable to fulfil all the requirements of their role due to a temporary or permanent disability.

- Number of staff who attend training
- PROMPT reflects Policy is up to date and available for reference.
- Job advertisements are reviewed and reflect encouragement or detail that supports applicants in identifying a disability supportive work place.
- Number of roles or opportunities identified
- Number of positions filled
- Utilise Commonwealth funding opportunities to support employees with a disability and their colleagues.
- Number of people successfully returned to suitable ongoing roles



IDEAS TO THINK ABOUT

When organising an event do you:

- Ask participants if they have any access or support requirements?
- Consider venues that allow people to enter, exit and move around the building with ease?
- Ensure there are accessible toilet facilities?
- Check that the room is 'hearing friendly'?
- Provide support workers if required?
- Limit visuals and ensure all visuals are easy to understand with good colour contrast?
- Promote your event through organisations and networks aimed at people with disabilities in order to fully access all possible audiences?

These and other considerations assist organisers to improve the accessibility of events to increase the participation of people with a disability.

This publication was endorsed by the following committees and groups at Cohuna District Hospital:
Executive Operations Committee
Occupational Health & Safety Committee
Partnering With Consumers Committee
Board of Management - Cohuna District Hospital
Primary responsibility for this document:
Executive Operations Committee

Any queries or correspondence related to this plan can be directed to:

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“The primary experience of a human being with a disability, at least the primary experience in relation to community, is one of thoughtless, unnecessary and hurtful exclusion from nearly every social, political, educational, cultural, commercial or communication transaction.

To encounter a barrier to freedom of movement or interaction once in a lifetime seems to send some people into a frenzy of punitive litigation; to encounter such barriers all day every day is the ordinary experience of people who have a disability.”

The late Elizabeth Hastings, former Disability Discrimination Commissioner, *“Access on the agenda: no longer an afterthought”*. Speech to the *Creating Accessible Communities Conference, Fremantle, Western Australia, 12 November 1996* Acknowledgement: *Cohuna District Hospital has drawn inspiration from a range of sources in the development of this plan and in particular would like to acknowledge the influence of the:*
DRAFT Disability Action Plan 2018-2020 Department of Health and Human Services

St Vincent’s Hospital Melbourne Disability Action Plan
Austin Health Disability Action Plan
Peninsula Health Disability Action Plan