



**Barwon
Health**

Disability Participation Action Plan

2020-2025

Forward

I am pleased to present the Barwon Health Disability Participation Action Plan (DAP). This plan has been designed to set out Barwon Health's role in improving the lives of people with disability living in the Geelong region and surrounds, and to bring us closer to becoming a fully inclusive employer. Barwon Health is committed to providing a positive and welcoming environment for all of our community, particularly people with disability.

As a leading provider of healthcare, we strive to ensure that the needs of all individuals in our diverse community are respected and valued, in order to provide high quality care to meet the unique needs of everyone that uses our service. This plan recognises the diverse needs of people with disability and intends to identify and address the barriers that patients, carers, staff and consumers with disability may face.

The Disability Participation Action Plan is in line with our values of respect, accountability, compassion, commitment and innovation. Our values govern how we connect with our consumers, our partners, our staff and the wider community.

We look forward to implementation of the Disability Participation Action Plan and achieving success in becoming a more inclusive and welcoming organisation to all people, as we endeavour to make a difference for our community.



Frances Diver
Chief Executive
Barwon Health

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Introduction

Barwon Health's Disability Participation Action Plan (DAP) has been developed with reference to the Victorian Disability Act 2006, the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards. Barwon Health's DAP outlines strategies and identifies actions, in accordance with the requirements of the Acts and the Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) policy in meeting the needs of patients, community and staff with disability.

Barwon Health is committed to ensuring that people with disability are treated equitably and given the same opportunities for inclusion, participation and access to services, programs and facilities within our community, as anyone else.

This DAP is outlining the commitment by our organisation to continue to build disability confidence, remove barriers for people with disability and meet the needs of patients, consumers, the community and employees with disability.

This plan is a living document and will be ever evolving due to the ongoing changes in National Standards and the needs of our consumers and staff within our community.



"Barwon Health's Disability Participation Action Plan heralds a new positive future for people with disabilities and their families accessing healthcare in our region.

This plan will help forge stronger relationships and build better, more accessible services for the community.

I am proud to be able to advocate for the community and use my voice to shape better experiences and health outcomes."

Kirby Littley

Section One

Aim

The purpose of this Disability Participation Action Plan (DAP) is to ensure that Barwon Health brings about changes in attitudes and promotes inclusion, participation and access for all members of our community with a disability. We will also use this DAP to ensure that Barwon Health provides equitable access to goods, services and facilities for everyone in our community.

Objectives

The objectives of the DAP is to create an environment across Barwon Health's sites and services where people with disabilities can engage, participate and thrive by:

- Removing existing barriers to accessing information, services and facilities for people with a disability.
- Designing future information, services and facilities without barriers to access for people with disability.
- Raising the level of awareness of all staff about the needs and rights of people with disabilities.
- Increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities and supporting them through the employment journey.

Policy and legislation

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) requires all people with disability to have the same human rights to equality as the rest of the community.¹

The Act defines 'disability', in relation to a person, as

- total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions
- total or partial loss of a part of the body

¹ *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. Available at: www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00125 (accessed 29/1/19).

- the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness
- the presence in the body of organisms capable of cause disease or illness
- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body
- a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or that results in disturbed behaviour.

and includes a disability that:

- presently exists
- previously existed but no longer exists
- may exist in the future
- is imputed to a person.

This DAP supports *the Disability Act 2006* requirement that all public sector bodies must prepare a Disability Action Plan for the purpose of:

- reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities;
- reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment;
- promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability;
- achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards

The NSQHS Standards provide a quality assurance mechanism and outline relevant systems to ensure that expected standards of safety and quality are met. The standards require Barwon Health to identify the diversity of its consumers and incorporate this information into the planning and delivery of care. Barwon Health does this by reviewing demographic data (such as age, gender, disability or ethnicity) to understand the diversity of its consumers, and continuously reviewing outcomes for effectiveness. Barwon Health uses its clinical governance and point of care processes to identify groups of patients who may be at greater risk of harm, or who are more likely to have a poor experience of health care, and uses a comprehensive, evidence-informed approach to care in order to manage these risks.

Standard Two, Partnering with Consumers, requires organisations to have patients as partners in their own care, and consumers as partners in planning, design, delivery, measurement and evaluation of the systems and services. To ensure Barwon Health meets Standard Two, it is essential we strive to achieve the following criteria:

- clinical governance and quality improvement systems to support partnering with consumers
- partnering with patients in their own care
- health literacy
- partnering with consumers in organisational design and governance.

Development and review of the plan

To demonstrate visible leadership commitment to disability and participation within Barwon Health, it will be integral that the leadership teams work actively to promote awareness and support the initiatives. This work will include but are not limited to the following monitoring process:

- The executive team is responsible for making sure all actions are monitored and reported.
- All directorates will provide updates about their progress to the executive team as part of the annual business plan reporting.
- A consumer feedback group will also provide yearly feedback about the plan for all levels of the organisation.
- Consumer spot audits will be conducted to evaluate and continually assess the Barwon Health service areas.

Governance

All Barwon Health services/departments/programs consider each of the key priority areas (refer to page 8) when reviewing their service and developing quality improvement activities in their annual business plan.

A representative from each priority area attends the DAP Steering Committee and reports on overall progress. This ground-up approach to understanding the diverse needs of our people,

and implementing local actions to better support these diverse needs, assists Barwon Health in meeting the needs of our staff.

The committee members are comprised of both staff and consumer representatives. The staff and consumers represent a range of diverse backgrounds. A member of the Disability Employee Network 'Open Mind' are representatives of the DAP Steering Committee.

Annual reporting will occur through the Barwon Health Quality Account, and progress updates provided to the People and Culture Governance Committee and Executive Governance Committee at Barwon Health.

Priority areas

Barwon Health's DAP focuses on the following priority areas for action:

1. Awareness, recognition and inclusion

- Driving cultural change through awareness, recognition and inclusion by actively promoting participation and disability inclusion.

2. Accessibility

- Ensuring that our consumers and staff can access and participate in all of our services offered at Barwon Health.

3. Provision of care through our services

- Supporting our community with their individual needs through inclusive and accessible care.

4. Increase employment opportunities

- Meaningful and sustainable employment to provide improved employment outcomes for all people participating in the workforce.

Section Two: Actioning Priority Areas

Priority area 1: Awareness, recognition and inclusion

Driving cultural change through awareness, recognition and inclusion by actively promoting participation and disability inclusion.

Goal	Actions	Performance indicators
Foster greater staff awareness of disability in order to ensure that we are inclusive of people with disability.	Disability Confidence training to be implemented throughout Barwon Health.	Number of staff who have attended Disability Confidence training and consumer feedback.
	Promote the Disability Participation Action Plan.	Current staff with an existing disability or have acquired a disability feel well supported (People Matter Survey results).
	Acknowledge and celebrate key dates including International Day of People with Disability.	Annual reviews through Quality Account.
Barwon Health policies, procedures and guidelines are inclusive.	Review current policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure they are in line with disability legislation.	Relevant policies reviewed in a timely manner.
	New policies, procedures and guidelines are developed in line with disability legislation.	Policies are reviewed for legislative compliance purposes prior to release.
Integration of the Disability Participation Action Plan into Barwon Health's strategic plan, annual business plans and service development.	Refer to and incorporate the DAP goals into the Barwon Health strategic planning process, and in the annual business plans and service plans.	DAP is embedded into future strategy and business plans.
Inclusive and appropriate	Re-label 'disabled toilets' to	Feedback from consumers,

signage, admission services and hospital environment .	'accessible toilets' throughout the hospital.	staff, families with disability.
Establish a Disability Employee Network ('Open Mind') to a) discuss issues, raise awareness and advocate for change, and b) connect employees with decision makers to influence strategic priorities.	Release an internal call to action for employees with a lived experience of disability to join the 'Open Mind'.	DEN has been created and have scheduled meetings.

Priority area 2: Accessibility

Ensuring that our consumers and staff can access and participate in all of our services offered at Barwon Health.

Goal	Actions	Performance indicators
Barwon health ensures that access to facilities is as safe and convenient as possible within the context of existing infrastructure. Ensure that the Disability Act and other relevant legislation are embedded in master planning, Service planning, tender and procurement processes.	Continue to review of the existing built environments to identify any major barriers to physical access. Ensure these are identified/flagged in the BH Master plan and Service planning and/or addressed immediately where possible.	Consumers and staff can access and participate in all services offered at Barwon Health.
Barwon Health routinely employs Principles and application of co-design in the development of all new services and facilities.	Upskill key staff and consumers in the process and application of co-design and human centred design. Employ these staff as champions or leads in key projects.	Each directorate has trained and established at least one staff member in co-design.
Ensure all new buildings, car parks and outdoor areas used to provide services comply with	Identify the relevant legislation and guidelines relating to accessibility of	All new buildings, car parks and outdoor areas are easily accessible for people with

relevant and necessary legislation.	buildings, car parks and outdoor areas, and plan an audit process and include consumer consultation as mandatory in the design process.	disability.
Improve access to vehicle drop off/pick up zones and waiting areas at Barwon Health.	Identify issues with access to drop off/ pick up zones and waiting zones in partnership with consumers with a disability	Feedback from consumers, staff and families with disability. Compliance with legislation.
Emergency evacuation procedures are in place for employees with disability.	Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) are offered to all staff that submit a workplace adjustment and implemented according to timelines in the Workplace Adjustment Procedure.	Number of employees with a disclosed disability, have a PEEP.
Provide television and visual media (e.g. videos) services with closed captions for patients who are hearing impaired.	Conduct an audit of the televisions at all Barwon Health sites, and respond by ensuring closed captions are available, when required, for all television services.	Number of televisions that have the ability to use closed captioning.
Integrated and consistent wayfinding strategy in place across all sites.	Staged implementation of the BH wayfinding strategy.	The Barwon Health wayfinding strategy is implemented in stages across all sites.
Barwon Health's website complies with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 to 'AA' compliance.	Review the Barwon Health website.	Barwon Health's website is audited and found compliant with guidelines.
Successful SCOPE audit across all sites.	Processes are developed to enable ongoing and sustainable participation in the SCOPE audit for Communication Access	New procedure for SCOPE audits in place by agreed timeframe.

	across all sites.	
WISE - All written information designed for consumers have been consumer tested for accessibility impairment and low health literacy.	Support current process and provide additional training for volunteers about the needs of specific disability groups. Include consumer with a communication disability on the WISE committee.	All documents have the WISE logo attached as proof of the document having been through the process. Consumer feedback.

Priority area 3: Provision of care through our services

Supporting our community with their individual needs through inclusive and accessible care.

Goal	Actions	Performance indicators
Ensure Barwon Health services are accessible to patients, visitors, and all consumers with disability.	Review the preadmission process to assess support requirements of people with a disability and their families	Consumer, staff and families with disability give feedback to support the completion of the action.
	Review policies on how we share information with clients.	Consumers have a range of safe and secure communication methods available to them to ensure barriers to communication and partnering in their healthcare are removed/minimised.
All consumers with complex access needs and their families/carers can formally communicate specific health and support needs to clinical and service staff through a health record.	Staff, consumers and families work in conjunction with Barwon Health to create and utilise a record of health care needs (that can therefore be used as a template to inform care provision for complex consumers).	Consumers with complex access needs have a record which outlines care preferences, legal responsibilities, communication and other access needs.

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.	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 gaps.	Patient information is provided in alternative formats that are acceptable to people with disabilities
A central database of equipment and resources available to staff and consumers with disabilities (availability, suitability, safety).	Undertake an audit of all resources and equipment made available to staff and consumers designed to reduce or eliminate barriers. Identify gaps and design a plan to address gaps.	Central database developed with a variety of resources & equipment available to staff and consumers with disability.

Priority area 4: Increase employment opportunities

Meaningful and sustainable employment to provide improved employment outcomes for all people participating in the workforce.

Goal	Actions	Performance indicators
Build inclusive recruitment practices to enable increased employment opportunities for people with disability.	Complete a review of our recruitment practices and processes including position descriptions	Recommendations for the review implemented.
Equip hiring managers with the skills to feel confident in employing people with disability, and how to support them through the employee journey.	Disability Confidence Recruiter (DCR) online training provided by Australian Network on Disability.	Number of managers who complete training within 2 years
	Promote and educate in the DHHS Disability Employment Toolkit to all managers.	Hiring Managers knowledge of the existence of the Toolkit. Positive employee feedback during onboarding and during employment.
	Ensure managers are aware	Increased number of

	of how to offer and implement workplace adjustments. Refer managers to the Workplace Adjustment Procedure.	requests for workplace adjustments.
Increase the number of employees with a disability that work at Barwon Health.	All vacant positions that are considered appropriate for people with certain disabilities (based on role scoping and job analysis) are flagged.	Process in place to flag suitable roles. Increased number of candidates with disability during recruitment processes.
Build further relationships and work in partnership with local disability employment services (DES) to source talent.	Work with DES to attract and recruit people with disability into vacant roles at Barwon Health.	Number of employees with disability that have been recruited through and with the assistance of a DES.

Acknowledgements

Barwon Health has drawn inspiration from a range of sources in the development of this DAP, including:

- Austin Health Disability action plan 2015-2020
- St Vincent's Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan 2015-18
- The Greater City of Geelong Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2018-22
- Absolutely Everyone Victorian State Disability Plan 2017-2020
- Every Opportunity Victorian Economic Participation Plan for People with Disability 2018-2020

