

MELBOURNE HEALTH

Disability Action Plan 2019-22

Introduction

Melbourne Health's (MH) inaugural Disability Action Plan (DAP) marks a significant step in supporting diversity and inclusion for both the people we employ and the people we serve and engage throughout our services. The Plan helps us to identify, reduce and remove barriers experienced by people with a disability and sets out what we will do to make our workplace, services, and programs more accessible, welcoming and inclusive. The DAP adopts a whole of health service approach incorporating activities across all MH Divisions including The Royal Melbourne Hospital and North Western Mental Health.

Defining disability

One in five Victorians has a disability¹. Disability can occur at any stage of a person's life. Some people are born with disability, while some disability is the result of an accident or develops over time. Disability can be described as any physical, sensory, intellectual, cognitive or psychiatric condition that impacts on a person's ability to undertake day to day activities. Not all disability is obvious and some disability can be episodic, permanent or can change over time.

Strategic Context

People with a disability remain one of the most disadvantaged groups of Australians, prompting a commitment from all levels of Government for a coordinated approach towards supporting people with a disability. MH is committed to develop an organisation-wide Disability Action Plan by June 2019 and outline an approach to fully implement the plan within MH by 30 June 2022 as set out in the Statement of Priorities agreement for 2018/19.

This Plan and the themes do meet the obligations of Section 38(1) of the Disability Act 2006 that requires all public sector bodies to ensure a DAP is prepared for the purpose of:

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

Principles and Priority Areas

The MH DAP is underpinned by the following principles which are fundamental for success of the Plan:

- Visible leadership commitment to disability inclusion which is aligned to MH's values of caring, excellence, respect, integrity, unity.
- Active engagement and participation of staff and service users (including patients, consumers and carers) with disability in the design, delivery and evaluation of initiatives.
- Universal design principles applied to programs, policies, practice and infrastructure to ensure MH services are accessible to people of all abilities

¹ Department of Health and Human Services 2016, A discussion paper of the Victorian State Disability plan 2017-2010.

There were four main priority areas that emerged from the staff and consumer consultations that form the basis of this Plan. Each of these themes is described **Table 1** including the desired outcome MH would like to see achieved.

Table 1

Focus areas	Desired outcomes
1. Physical access and equipment	MH patients and consumers will have improved physical access to buildings, facilities and equipment to maintain independence and dignity.
2. Provision of appropriate care	MH will better understand and respond to the needs of people with a disability including the provision of information and support required
3. Knowledge, attitudes and practices	Staff employed at MH will be knowledgeable about the DAP and will have opportunities to engage in disability related events and training.
4. Gaining and maintaining employment	MH will provide inclusive employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Development of the Plan

The DAP has been developed by the Disability Working Group, which reports to the Respect and Partnerships in Care Committee under the leadership of the Executive Director, Nursing Services. Committee members comprised of consumers and staff who were champions for the DAP and passionate about better meeting the needs of people with a disability who access or are employed by MH.

The DAP was developed in accordance with aDAPting to Disability - A guide to disability action plans in Victoria (2nd edition) and in line with MH's vision of First in Care, Research and Learning. MH policies, procedures and frameworks that have direct application to promoting inclusive practice and helped inform development of the DAP include (but not limited to):

- MH04 Inclusive Practice Policy
- MH Health Literacy Framework
- MH03 Consumer, Carer and Community Participation Policy
- NWMH03.01.01 Consumer and Carer Leadership and Participation Procedure
- MH03.01 Patient Rights and Responsibilities Procedure
- MH09.04.13 Accommodating Disability Through Reasonable Adjustment Procedure
- MH09.04.04 Equal Opportunity Procedure

Monitoring and reviewing the DAP

The DAP is an evolving plan of action that requires ongoing review, evaluation and monitoring by the Disability Working Group to ensure its effectiveness. Measures have been determined for each action and will be reviewed regularly over the life of the plan. Updates on the DAP will be provided to the MH Respect and Partnerships in Care Committee quarterly and to the MH Executive and Community Advisory Committee 6 monthly. Progress on the actions will be reported in the MH Annual Report.

1. Physical Access and Equipment

Desired outcome: Melbourne Health patients and consumers will have improved physical access to buildings, facilities and equipment to maintain independence and dignity.

Focus area	Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timing			
				Ongoing	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Reducing physical access barriers	Review existing access audit tools and where appropriate, conduct audits across MH sites. N.B environmental audit tools will be considered as part of this review.	Audit tools reviewed Schedule of audits developed # audits completed and recommendations made	Facilities Management in collaboration with Local Area Manager	✓			✓
Accessible and timely equipment	Determine locations for hearing loops and recharge points for mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs across MH sites	Locations determined in partnership consumers and carers. Recommendations actioned	Director Facilities Management			✓	
	Develop a project plan to ensure readily accessible and timely access to equipment for people with a disability	Project plan developed	Director Facilities Management				✓

2. Provision of appropriate care

Desired outcome: MH will better understand and respond to the needs of people with a disability including the provision of information and support required.

Focus area	Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timing			
				Ongoing	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Identification of population	Develop project scope and methodology for the identification of MH patients and consumers with a disability to inform planning and service provision.	Data available on MH's consumers and carers with a disability.	Community Engagement Manager		✓		
Improving patient and consumer experience	Analyse existing patient and consumer experience data relating to disability and determine areas for improvement.	Analysis undertaken and areas for improvement identified.	Patient Experience Manager			✓	
Supporting mealtime	Improve access to meals and reduce discrimination through volunteer support during mealtime and review of food packages for patients and consumers.	# increase in existing patient and consumer experience data relating to mealtime support.	Comprehensive Care Lead	✓	✓		
Providing accessible information	Ensure information (including written and multimedia) is available in accessible formats to enable people with a disability to	Review undertaken utilising MH's Health Literacy Framework and gaps identified	Community Engagement Manager				✓

	make informed choices about their care.						
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3. Knowledge, attitudes and practices

Desired outcome: Staff employed at MH will be knowledgeable about the DAP and will have opportunities to engage in disability related events and training.

Focus area	Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timing			
				Ongoing	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Increasing awareness and celebrating inclusion	Develop a calendar and celebrate appropriate disability related events to raise awareness about inclusiveness and equality.	Calendar developed Relevant events celebrated and promoted	Community Engagement Manager	✓	✓		
	Utilise the 'consumer voice' in education and training through patient and consumer stories including NWMH recovery stories	Stories shared of the experiences of people with a disability.	Patient Experience Manager and relevant NWMH lead (TBC)	✓			
	Communicate the DAP and relevant policies to staff across MH	DAP referenced in MH Orientation program # presentations to the relevant governance committees	Patient Experience Manager		✓		
Developing knowledge and skills	Develop a plan to improve staff uptake of the MH Disability e-learning package	# and % increase in staff completing disability awareness training.	Community Engagement Manager	✓			

4. Gaining and maintaining employment

Desired outcome: Melbourne Health will provide inclusive employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Focus area	Action	Measure	Responsibility	Timing			
				Ongoing	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Equal employment opportunities	Engage with local disability employment organisations to ensure recruitment across MH is fair and equitable with consideration of people with a disability.	Engagement with local disability employment organisations	People and Culture Operations	✓			
Supporting existing workforce	Review current procedures that support people with disabilities in MH's workforce and identify areas for improvement	Review undertaken and areas for improvement identified	People and Culture Operations			✓	✓
Volunteer opportunities	Explore new and review existing volunteer program opportunities that engage people with disabilities.	Opportunities identified and developed	Volunteer and Community Engagement Coordinator	✓			