

# UNITING SA *Together We can*

## Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2021-2022

“A compassionate, respectful and just community  
in which all people participate and flourish”



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## Introduction

UnitingSA aims for excellence in service delivery. The Board and management of UnitingSA are committed to practices that promote a compassionate, respectful and just community in which all people participate and flourish. UnitingSA is proud to have developed this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan as part of the organisations overall commitment to quality service provision and to assist people to overcome barriers to living life to the full.

This UnitingSA Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is integrated within our Strategic Plan and provides a framework that will support management and employees in meeting the requirements of legislation, whilst striving for best practice. This plan will support us to help build strong communities which are inclusive and which celebrate diversity. The UnitingSA Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is based on six key outcomes:

### **Outcome 1: Inclusive and accessible communities**

People with disability live in accessible and well-designed communities with opportunity for full inclusion in social, economic, sporting and cultural life.

### **Outcome 2: Economic security and employment**

People with disability, their families and carers have economic security, enabling them to plan for the future and exercise choice and control over their lives.

### **Outcome 3: Rights protection, justice and legislation**

People with disability have their rights promoted, upheld and protected.

### **Outcome 4: Personal and community support**

People with disability, their families and carers have access to a range of supports to assist them to live independently and actively engage in their communities.

### **Outcome 5: Learning and skills**

People with disability achieve their full potential through their participation in an inclusive high-quality education system that is responsive to their needs.

### **Outcome 6: Health and wellbeing**

People with disability attain the highest possible health and wellbeing outcomes throughout their lives.

## Our Business

UnitingSA, established in 1919, is a South Australian based community service agency of the Uniting Church. UnitingSA seeks to work in partnership with clients and others in the community, to empower individuals, strengthen families and build communities.

UnitingSA's main areas of work include:

- aged care;
- employment and training;
- social housing and homelessness;
- supporting people who have disability;
- supporting people who have mental illness;
- supporting people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and
- vulnerable young people, adults and families.

## Our Vision

A compassionate, respectful and just community in which all people participate and flourish.

## Our Mission

UnitingSA exists to respond to the needs of communities, families and individuals so together we can improve lives.

## Our Values

- Respect
- Compassion
- Courage
- Integrity

# Organisational Goals

## **Goal 1: Services**

Consistently deliver the best possible outcomes for the people we work alongside.

## **Goal 2: Advocacy**

Be a strong advocate for better policies and services that improve lives and communities.

## **Goal 3: Dynamic Organisation**

Ensure an innovative, quality and sustainable business for the future.

## **Goal 4: Our People**

Support staff and volunteers to fulfil their roles confidently and develop within a culture aligned to our values.

## Disability Access and Inclusion Context

In keeping with the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD): “The Convention follows decades of work by the United Nations to change attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities. It takes to a new height the movement from viewing persons with disabilities as “objects” of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as “subjects” with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society.” Quote from: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

**UnitingSA is committed to supporting the eight guiding principles that underlie the Convention and each one of its specific articles:**

1. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and independence of persons.
2. Non-discrimination.
3. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society.
4. Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity.
5. Equality of opportunity.
6. Accessibility.
7. Equality between men and women.
8. Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

**UnitingSA also acknowledges that people with disability:**

1. Are individuals, no matter how they acquired their disability, what sort of disability they have or how severe the disability.
2. Have the same human rights and responsibilities as any member of the Australian community.
3. Have the same rights as any member of the Australian community to realise their potential for intellectual, physical, social, emotional, sexual and spiritual development.
4. Have the same rights as any member of the Australia community to make their own decisions about their lifestyle.
5. Have a right to be protected from neglect, abuse, intimidation and exploitation.
6. Have the same rights as any member of the Australian community to the assistance and support that will enable them to exercise their rights, discharge their responsibilities and attain a fulfilling quality of life.

# What does a disability access and inclusion plan do?

- Shows commitment and eliminates discrimination;
- Promotes principles of access and equity
- Achieves service goals
- Benefits customers, residents and employees;
- Assists our organisation to comply with the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and minimises the need for complaints.
- Assists UnitingSA to manage services to support the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)



## UnitingSA will conduct its business in a way that:

- Promotes an increased awareness of the rights, needs and contribution by people with disability as valued members of the community.
- Supports access and equity for all South Australians with disability and prevents discrimination on the basis of age, gender, sexuality, religion, language and culture.
- Ensures that the interests of people with disability are always considered in the co-design, planning and provision of services.
- Takes reasonable measures to make the physical environment accessible and provides access to information and communication for people with disability.
- Help us work collaboratively with people with disability and in partnerships with other agencies and disability advocacy groups, to ensure levels of service are appropriate to the needs of people with disability can be provided.
- Actively promotes equal opportunities for people with disability in the field of employment or volunteering options. UnitingSA will negotiate reasonable accommodation workplace adjustments when required and draw upon appropriate expertise of UnitingSA services.
- Actively seeks and responds to customer feedback.
- Promotes supported businesses within Australian Disability Enterprises.
- Ensures training of employees and volunteers involved in the planning and provision of programs and services as important elements of promoting full participation and equality for people with disability.
- Advances equal opportunity for people with disability by striving for continuous quality improvement in the implementation of disability action plans;
- Supports the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

## Acknowledgements

This Disability Access and Inclusion Plan was developed by a working party in consultation with the Department of Human Services.

Further information is available by contacting:

Manager Quality, telephone 8440 2255 or

Website <http://www.unitingsa.com.au>



# Outcome 1 - Inclusive and accessible communities

People with disability live in accessible and well-designed communities with opportunity for full inclusion in social, economic sporting and cultural life.

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Review Timeframe</b>	<b>Measurable Target</b>
1	Appropriate building designs standards that include access and mobility requirements will be used when considering purchasing or leasing any new UnitingSA properties. A checklist will be used when considering current building access issues and future decision making when purchasing or leasing new buildings	Manager Property Services and WH&S Manager	July 2022	The 'Occupation of New Premises (WH&S considerations) Procedure is reviewed on a three yearly basis and the Pre-Occupation Checklist updated at the same time to ensure we monitor compliance issues.
2	Ensure that all building / architect / engineering Consultants consider resident, employee and visitor access and mobility requirements as part of the planning phase for any new projects. All drawings and plans must comply with local Council disability access requirements.	Manager Property Services, WH&S Manager and Managers	July 2022	All new building refurbishments meet disability access requirements.
3	Maintain website 'accessibility' function on the UnitingSA website.	SASI Marketing Team	July 2022	Our website has print adjustment icons and includes a 'Facebook' page.
4	Develop strategies to increase customer access to social, sporting and cultural life.	Managers	July 2022	Goals are developed in consultation with customers. Events are promoted.

## Outcome 2 – Economic security and employment

People with disability, their families and carers have economic security, enabling them to plan for the future and exercise choice and control over their lives.

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Review Timeframe</b>	<b>Measurable Target</b>
1	Ensure that 'reasonable accommodation' workplace adjustments are reviewed or considered when required to support employees and volunteers with disability.	All Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Office equipment is purchased and/or adjusted as required.
2	Build Partnerships with disability specific employment and job provider services, to allow streamlined connection to relevant services.	Site specific, Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Partnerships with, or co- location of services within UnitingSA programs.
3	Encourage employees to identify disability issues of concern and participate in developing solutions. Address disability issues for new employees and customers at site specific induction / introduction sessions.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Disability information presented at corporate orientation and site orientation phase.
4	Continue to review all recruitment strategies and advertisements to ensure they provide access options for people with disability.	People and Culture Team	July 2022	Annual review of employee recruitment strategies.
5	Utilise the Lived Experience workforce to support the organisation with planning, review and the delivery of services.	Consumer Consultant, Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Lived Experience Workforce Procedure has been communicated & strategies implemented.
6	Comply with NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Standards and promote customer choice and control within all services.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Participation in NDIS audits & outcomes reflect customer needs.

## Outcome 3 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

People with disability have their rights upheld, promoted and protected.

	Actions	Responsibility	Review Timeframe	Measurable Target
1	Ensure that all UnitingSA policies are inclusive of people with disability and are not discriminatory in any way. Review policies as part of 3 year review cycle and update to ensure we meet legislative requirements.	People and Culture Team & Manager Quality	July 2022	Corporate policies and procedures are checked during review process.
2	Ensure that we provide a service environment where risks to the rights and well-being of people with disability receiving supports and services are minimised and ensure that if we become aware of an instance of abuse, neglect or exploitation that we respond promptly with a professional, ethical and compassionate approach.	Executive Managers, Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	The Freedom from Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Procedure is complied with.
3	Continue to work with peak disability bodies e.g. National Disability Services, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Disability Employment Australia (DEA), Mental Health Services and Disability Employment Services.	Executive Managers, Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Ongoing cooperation with peak bodies is maintained. Record how UnitingSA has adapted & responded to continuous improvement initiatives from these Peak Bodies.
4	Maintain participation in the annual 'Mental Health Services' Conference which addresses current issues in mental health service provision as well as participation in disability services conferences etc.	Executive Managers and Managers	July 2022	Participate in Mental Health Week in October each year. Training records record participation in disability services training.
5	Promote disability awareness via acknowledging and supporting events including Mental Health Week and various disability and Aged Care expos e.g. International Day of Disabled Persons (December 3)	Managers and Coordinators & SASI Marketing	July 2022	'Upcoming Events' section in Flourish Magazine notes these events.

## Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

People with disability, their families and carers have access to a range of supports to assist them to live independently and actively engage in their communities.

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Review Timeframe</b>	<b>Measurable Target</b>
1	Develop plain English service information for sites e.g. brochures, posters and booklets. Make changes if necessary for relevant client groups using site specific consumer advisory groups if available. Access brochures in other languages from public sites when required.	Managers, Coordinators & SASI Marketing Team	July 2022	Strategic Plan, Annual Report, brochures and website include improved visual information.
2	Continue to support the participation of consumers, Consumer Consultants Peer Support Workers and consumer advisory groups e.g. Co-Design Consumer/Carer Group in planning and decision making processes.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Consumer Consultants and Peer Support Workers provide feedback regarding service delivery issues and policy reviews.
3	Use customer surveys, focus groups and feedback mechanisms to ensure customer needs are being met regarding access and mobility issues etc. Use information to improve services.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Surveys are completed in Aged Care and Community Services sites. Sites have suggestion boxes. Focus Group feedback is communicated to Managers and improvements are implemented.
4	Maintain person-centred approach to service delivery which is based on the needs and aspirations of the individual, not their disability.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Individual plans are created in consultation with customers and are reviewed on a regular basis.
5	Provide care which supports customers to safely reside in their own home/s.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Individual plans reflect customer choices and strategies are managed.

## Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

People with disability achieve their full potential through their participation in an inclusive, high quality, education system that is responsive to their needs. People with disability have opportunities to continue learning throughout their lives.

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Review Timeframe</b>	<b>Measurable Target</b>
1	Work with accredited Interpreters and/or Auslan Interpreters when working with people who have a disability from CALD backgrounds and access translating and interpreting services when required.	Managers, Coordinators and Ethnic Link Services	July 2022	Ethnic Link Services provide ongoing support for customers over 65 years with disability.  The use of Interpreters is included within individual plans.
2	Promote a positive learning culture for people with disability and opportunities to complete educational courses and 'in house' training. E.g. training provided by Wesley Social Enterprises.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Information is recorded in service recipient files.
3	Increase professional learning opportunities for employees to support their understanding and skills in meeting the needs and aspirations of customers and Supported Employees with special education needs.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Training recorded in data base and opportunities advertised in Training Calendar.
4	People with disability are supported to maintain involvement in education system or vocational options. E.g. Work of Youth Services, 24H Youth Accommodation Service and Taperoo Community Centre.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Information is recorded in service recipient files. E.g. Certificates of completion or enrolment.



## Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

People with disability are supported to attain the highest possible health throughout their lives.

	Actions	Responsibility	Review Timeframe	Measurable Target
1	Promote healthy living activities and lifestyles. The increasing prevalence of chronic diseases is linked to unhealthy lifestyles, e.g. the consequences of under nutrition, obesity, smoking, alcohol and lack of physical exercise.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	People with disability are included in health promotion activities.
2	Promote the health and well being of people with disability in health care planning and lifestyle goal setting. E.g. promote vaccinations, support dental visits and promote social and emotional support strategies.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Service recipients' Individual Plans include health maintenance goals and support strategies where required.
3	Deliver services and programs that keep older people with disabilities out of hospitals and shift the balance of care toward care provided in the community. E.g. Home Care Packages and Ethnic Link Services.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Strategies are identified in support plans and regular reviews identify progress.
4	Provide training and skills development for employees working with people with disability. E.g. NDIS compulsory Orientation training, Zero Tolerance Training (prevent and respond to abuse, neglect and violence of people with disability), Aged Care Channel and external training providers as well as UnitingSA Training Calendar.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Training recorded in data base and opportunities advertised in Training Calendar.
5	Alternative health promotion support is established during times of a community wide crisis, pandemic or other interruption to health care services. E.g. Support to use electronic systems e.g. tablets/computers, telephone / mobile phone support and assistance to use on-line services.	Managers and Coordinators	July 2022	Customer 'case notes' reflect alternative options and outcomes are regularly reviewed.