

UNITING SA *Together We can*

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2023

“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 Purpose

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

The South Australian Disability Inclusion Act 2018 defines disability as: “Disability, in relation to a person, includes long-term physical, psycho-social, intellectual, cognitive, neurological or sensory impairment, or a combination of any of these impairments, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the person’s full and effective participation in society on equal basis with others”.

The Disability Inclusion Act 2018 provides a legal framework to support equal access and inclusion for people living with disability in community activities and services including recreation, education, health, and public transport. The Act aligns with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

In keeping with the CRPD: “The Convention follows decades of work by the United Nations to change attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities.

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?

- 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). The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person, in many areas of public life, including employment, education, getting or using services, renting or buying a house or unit and accessing public places, because of their disability.
- 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 SA.

Further information is available by contacting:

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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.

	Actions	Responsibility	Review Timeframe	Measurable Target
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 and Facilities and WHS Manager	July 2023	The 'Occupation of New Premises (WH&S considerations) Procedure is reviewed on a three yearly basis.
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 and Facilities and WHS Manager	July 2023	All new buildings and refurbishments meet disability access requirements.
3	Maintain website 'accessibility' function on the UnitingSA website.	Marketing and Communications Team	July 2023	The UnitingSA website has print adjustment icons and includes a 'Facebook' page.
4	Develop strategies to increase customer access to social, sporting and cultural life.	Leaders	July 2023	Goals are developed in consultation with customers. Events are promoted and facilitated as required.

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.

	Actions	Responsibility	Review Timeframe	Measurable Target
1	Ensure that 'reasonable accommodation' workplace adjustments are reviewed or considered when required to support employees and volunteers with disability.	Leaders	July 2023	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.	Leaders	July 2023	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.	Leaders	July 2023	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 Quality Team	July 2023	Annual review of employee recruitment strategies.
5	Utilise the Lived Experience workforce to support the organisation with planning, review and the delivery of services.	Leaders	July 2023	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.	NDIS Leaders	July 2023	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 Quality Team & Manager Quality	July 2023	Corporate policies and procedures are checked for inclusion requirements 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 Team and Leaders	July 2023	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 Team and Leaders	July 2023	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 Week' which aims to improve community awareness and interest in mental health and wellbeing as well as ongoing mental health related training.	Executive Team and Leaders	July 2023	Participation in Mental Health Week in October each year. Training records record participation in mental health related 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).	Leaders & Marketing and Communications Team	July 2023	'Upcoming Events' section in Flourish Magazine notes these events. Teal Talk e-Bulletin include articles.

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.

	Actions	Responsibility	Review Timeframe	Measurable Target
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.	Leaders & Marketing and Communications Team	July 2023	Strategic Plan, Annual Report, brochures and website include visual information.
2	Continue to support the participation of consumers, Peer Support Workers and consumer advisory groups e.g. Great Client Experience Group and Consumer Groups in planning and decision making processes.	Leaders	July 2023	Consumers and Peer Support Workers provide feedback regarding service delivery issues and improvements.
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.	Leaders	July 2023	Surveys are completed in Aged Care and Community Services sites. Sites have suggestion boxes. Focus Group feedback is communicated to Leaders 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.	Leaders	July 2023	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.	Leaders	July 2023	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.

	Actions	Responsibility	Review Timeframe	Measurable Target
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.	Leaders and Ethnic Link Services	July 2023	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.	Leaders	July 2023	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.	Leaders	July 2023	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.	Leaders	July 2023	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.	Leaders	July 2023	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.	Leaders	July 2023	Service recipients' Individual Plans include health maintenance goals and support strategies where required.
3	Deliver services and programs that keep older people with disability out of hospitals and shift the balance of care toward care provided in the community. E.g. Community Aged Care and Ethnic Link Services.	Leaders	July 2023	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 Worker Orientation 'Quality, Safety and You' training, Understanding Abuse - Zero Tolerance training (prevent and respond to abuse, neglect and violence of people with disability), Aged Care Channel and external training providers.	Leaders	July 2023	Training recorded in data base.
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.	Leaders	July 2023	Customer 'case notes' or 'event notes' reflect alternative options and outcomes are regularly reviewed.