



 Part of the United Church in Australia and a member of the UnitingCare network

We Are Wesley

Strategic Plan 2013-15



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HOPE | COMPASSION | JUSTICE

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These are exciting times for Wesley Mission Victoria as we proudly present our Strategic Plan for 2013-2015. It gives us strong direction and renewed purpose as we provide our many and varied services in a challenging and rapidly changing environment.

Wesley is emerging from a challenging period in which we have seen significant service growth whilst establishing a new leadership structure. In addition, tough economic conditions have impacted upon government funding levels and philanthropic support. We are also seeing major welfare and community sector reform that not only creates some significant planning uncertainties but also great opportunities, such as the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The preparation of the Strategic Plan has given Wesley's leadership the opportunity to engage extensively with our stakeholders who have provided valuable input. We have consulted widely with staff and volunteers, clients and their family members and carers, Government representatives, the Uniting Church, and many other people from the services sectors as well as our Management, Executive and Board. We are very grateful to everyone who contributed willingly and constructively and have considered all feedback in the planning process. It has been a positive 'listening' experience as we strive to continually improve our services so that they meet the needs of the people we serve. It has also been an opportunity for us to reflect on our Vision, Purpose and Values in order to bring greater clarity to who we are, what we do and why we do it.

One of the most important messages that we heard during the consultation process was that one of Wesley's key strengths is the passion and commitment of our staff and volunteers. Accordingly one of our major strategic directions is to continue to value and invest in our most important asset – our people. We also have a talented and committed Executive team that has been instrumental in pulling together all the stakeholder inputs into this completed Strategic Plan. Finally, our Board has led the overall strategic planning process and is fully committed to its successful delivery.

Thank you once again to all those who journeyed with us in the development of this Strategic Plan. We look forward to your contribution to its successful implementation.



Dr Sherene Devanesen
Chair of the Board



Rob Evers
Chief Executive Officer

We respond to people's diverse needs and empower them to lead full lives as equal members of our community.

Our organisation exists for our clients, and in this strategic plan our focus is on those areas we believe will have most impact on the lives of people who experience disadvantage and vulnerability.

The central commitments that inform our directions are that:

- > **we will ensure our clients are at the centre of all we do;**
- > **we will do our core work well;**
- > **we will innovate and find new solutions and responses and**
- > **we will use our voice to influence community attitudes and government policy.**

Ensuring that we are a client centred organisation means more than listening, understanding and responding to the needs of clients. Locating clients at the centre of service delivery where they are well informed, exercise choice and make decisions will require us to find new ways of engaging with clients. Increasingly, clients are expecting us to partner with them in service delivery and in some cases to co-design our service responses with them. This expectation of partnership also extends to the families and carers of our clients. We recognise that families and carers matter in people's lives and want to be appropriately included. We are committed to re-positioning our relationship with clients, their families and carers to one of partnering in both our service delivery and in our advocacy work.

To undertake our core work well we must have a strong focus on:

- > strengthening the quality of our practice based on evidence and research
- > monitoring and being accountable for service outcomes
- > connecting our existing services more effectively and working together to realise the benefits that arise from being a large and diverse organisation
- > strengthening our responsiveness to diversity within our community
- > supporting and developing our staff and volunteers
- > providing stable and strong leadership
- > providing effective stewardship of our resources
- > providing a safe and healthy environment for our clients and workforce

We want to be able to say with confidence that what we are doing we are doing well. We owe that to those whom we support, to those who fund and support us in our work, and to ourselves.

We are also committed to finding new and better ways to meet the needs of our clients. Having a range of services means Wesley is very well placed to make the journey from a 'program' approach to a focus on the person. Over the next three years Wesley will seek out service integration opportunities across our own programs and in partnership with other organisations. Our clients, the community and government are also calling for innovation. In some areas, doing more of the same things well is not enough. As a large community service organisation we have a critical role to play in identifying and developing new responses both for ourselves and in partnership with others. We also need to prepare for a changing world of major reforms, such as increased client choice and client directed funding.

Wesley has always been more than a service provider. Over the next three years we intend to revitalise our tradition of advocacy, of speaking out and challenging social systems and policies which negatively affect vulnerable people and those experiencing disadvantage. Our history and our heritage have instilled in Wesley the core values of hope, compassion and justice. These require of us both words and action.

Strategic Directions

IMPROVE CLIENTS' LIVES

Provide quality, safe, person centred services to improve the lived experience and outcomes for clients

- > Enable clients to have a greater voice in informing our actions
- > Build knowledge and practice excellence that supports quality service delivery
- > Strengthen our understanding and responsiveness to diversity
- > Bring an outcomes focus to our work
- > Integrate and realign services to better respond to client needs

Speak with a clear voice and undertake effective advocacy to build better lives and a more just society

- > Advocate for change informed by our core values, our expertise, and clear policy positions
- > Position Wesley as a key player in government policy development, in our sectors and in the wider community
- > Increase our visibility in the arena of public policy through strategic partnerships
- > Facilitate the engagement of our staff, clients and supporters in public debate and advocacy

SPEAK OUT AND INFLUENCE

Ensure we meet our organisational responsibilities and have effective structures, systems and resources to do our work well

- > Understand and respond to the needs of the First Australians
- > Be a socially and environmentally responsible organisation
- > Strengthen our relationship with Uniting Church bodies
- > Ensure our policies, processes, systems and structures meet organisational needs
- > Build the awareness and reputation of Wesley
- > Maximise the value and security for the organisation through strategic management of assets and finances

STRENGTHEN OUR FOUNDATIONS

Build a culture where people are supported and developed to deliver quality work in a safe and healthy organisation

- > Build the capacity of our people
- > Create a sustainable and healthy culture across the organisation
- > Ensure we have the workforce to meet current and future needs
- > Lead a culture of shared responsibility for a safe organisation

VALUE OUR PEOPLE

Identify and develop new responses to better meet the needs of our clients

- > Develop new ways of responding using our knowledge and evidence
- > Invest in our knowledge and research capability
- > Lead thinking and action on partnerships for greater impact
- > Pursue opportunities consistent with our mission, strategy and capability

LEAD AND INNOVATE

HOPE | COMPASSION | JUSTICE



We Are Wesley

Our Heritage

Wesley Mission Victoria has a long and proud history. It began as Melbourne Central Mission in 1893 as a response by the Methodist Church of Australia to the severe economic depression and associated inner-city poverty of the early 1890s in Melbourne. It was located on the same site the Mission occupies today next to the Wesley Church in Lonsdale Street in central Melbourne. The Mission's work was based on a concern for people in need, particularly those who were abused, addicted, homeless or impoverished. Since its establishment, the Mission has been known for its outspoken advocacy for social reform.

Over the years, the Mission expanded its role of reaching out to marginalised and vulnerable people by developing a wide range of programs and services. When the Uniting Church was formed in 1977, it became known as the Wesley Central Parish Mission. In 2001 it incorporated as Wesley Mission Melbourne (and subsequently Wesley Mission Victoria) with an independent board.

Connection with the Uniting Church

As part of the Uniting Church, Wesley Mission Victoria is a contemporary expression of the Christian tradition of bringing God's life and hope to communities and individuals. The 'Great Commandment' of Jesus to love God and to love one's neighbour provides a clear framework for the mission of Uniting Church agencies.

While being clearly grounded in the historic Christian tradition and the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the ethos of the Uniting Church is to be open to people of all faiths and none, to seek partnerships in its community service work and to advocate for a just society. The community service agencies of the Uniting Church are inclusive of all people - clients, families, staff, volunteers and communities - regardless of faith, cultural background, age, sexual orientation or gender.

Wesley Mission Victoria Today

Today Wesley Mission Victoria is a practical expression of the Uniting Church's commitment to social justice. Wesley cares about people who experience loneliness, disadvantage, vulnerability, isolation and disability. Through a range of programs and services, we respond to people's diverse needs and empower them to lead full lives as equal members of our community. Wesley also helps to address the structures in our society that contribute to disadvantage through our policy, research and advocacy work.

The Mission's work was based on a concern for people in need, particularly those who were abused, addicted, homeless or impoverished.

OUR VISION

A community where all people can participate with dignity and hope.

OUR PURPOSE

We support people experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability to improve their life outcomes.

We advocate for a more just society.

OUR VALUES

HOPE is the promise of a better future for every person in a fairer world.

COMPASSION is seeking to understand the experience of others, standing alongside and being moved to respond.

JUSTICE is the right of all people to be treated with respect and fairness in an equitable society.