



**ST VINCENT'S
PRIVATE HOSPITAL**
MELBOURNE
A FACILITY OF ST VINCENT'S HEALTH AUSTRALIA



2025 - 2027 Access and Inclusion Plan

Better and
fairer care.
Always.

Statement of Acknowledgement

St Vincent's acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters where we live and work. We respect historical and continuing spiritual connections to Country and community and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. As a health and aged care provider, we commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

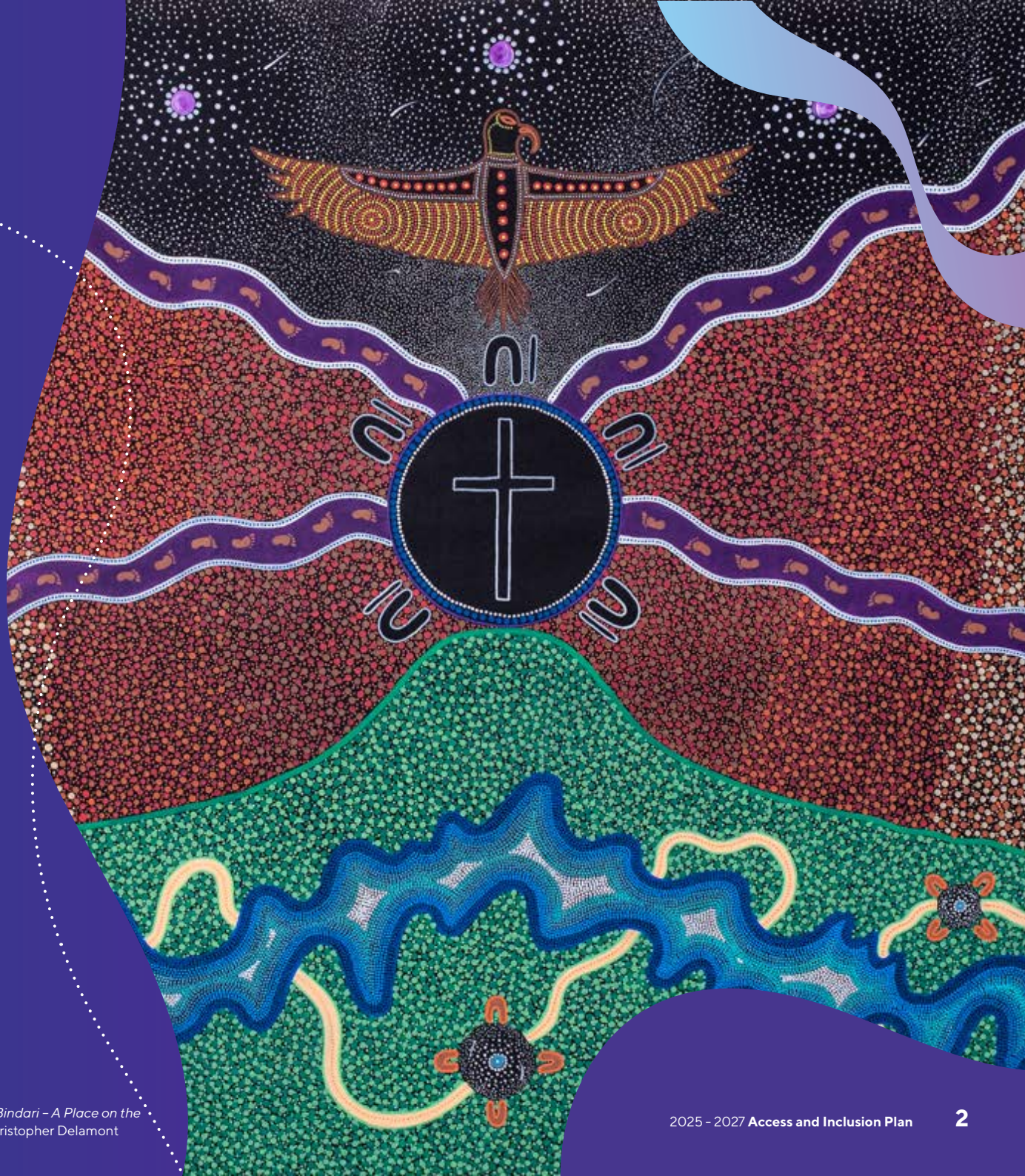


Inclusivity

We celebrate, value and include people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.



Right: *Bindari – A Place on the Hill*, Christopher Delamont





Our Mission

As a Catholic healthcare service we bring God’s love to those in need through the healing ministry of Jesus. We are especially committed to people who are poor or vulnerable.

Our Vision

We lead through research driven, excellent and compassionate health and aged care.

Our Values

St Vincent’s Health Australia’s four core values are:



COMPASSION

Our care is an act of love.
We are present and accompany people when they are most in need.



JUSTICE

To act with courage and speak in pursuit of what is right and just.



INTEGRITY

Ensuring our actions and decisions are transparent.



EXCELLENCE

Our care is safe, evidence based and continually seeking to improve.

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Message from the CEO

I am very pleased to present St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne's first Access and Inclusion Plan.

Around one in six (18%) people in Australia has a disability. The Access and Inclusion Plan outlines the ways we will continue to work towards a more inclusive culture that ensures representation of people with disability and all people who face barriers to access and equity. The plan highlights what we need to do to be accessible in our built environment and communications and the ways we will ensure quality and safe patient-centred care for all.

We will continue to seek and take the lead from people with lived experience of disability and those facing barriers such as discrimination and unconscious bias.

We are committed to our staff and the diverse individuals and groups we serve. Our commitment is genuine and underscores all that we do. Inspired by our founding Sisters of Charity and underpinned by our values, we are especially committed to people who are poor and vulnerable.

Aligned with the St Vincent's Strategy 2030 vision – "every person, wherever and wherever they are, is served with excellent and compassionate care, by a better and fairer health and aged care system", this Access and Inclusion Plan is a framework that will guide us as we strive to make St Vincent's Private Hospital an inclusive place to work and be cared for.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to the development of this plan, particularly those with lived experience. I look forward to continuing this collaborative effort as we embark on initiatives to ensure we are active and responsive to the needs of the diverse communities we serve.

Better and fairer care. Always.

Janine Loader
Regional CEO
St Vincent's Private Hospital Victoria

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What is an Access and Inclusion Plan?

This Access and Inclusion Plan is a framework for St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne to approach all improvement work relating to people with disability and others who face barriers to access and equity.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- People with disability, their family and carers
- People who are facing other barriers to access and equity including from the First Nations and LGBTIQ+ communities
- People from diverse cultural backgrounds and faiths
- People who do not speak English or whose preferred language is not English
- Parents / carers of children with special needs and Adults with special needs

The plan combines our existing and future improvement activities under three priority areas. It outlines specific strategies to guide our work and key performance indicators to measure success.

This Access and Inclusion Plan supports our obligations under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Australian Charter of Health Care Rights.

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The Access and Inclusion Plan also aligns with the Victorian Disability Act 2006 requirement for public sector bodies to have a Disability Action Plan. While St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne is a private health care provider, we are committed to the desired outcomes of this legislation. Specifically:

1. Reducing barriers to people with a disability in accessing goods, services and facilities.
2. Reducing barriers to people with a disability in obtaining and maintaining employment.
3. Promoting inclusion and participation of people with a disability in the community.
4. Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against people with a disability.



1 in 6

(18%) people in Australia have disability (about 4.4 million people)



1 in 3

(32%) people with disability have severe or profound disability (about 1.4 million people)



for 1 in 4

(23%) people with disability, their main form of disability is mental or behavioural



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Our Commitment

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This Access and Inclusion Plan reflects our commitment to the guiding principles of the:

- [Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006](#)
- [Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [Victorian Disability Act 2006](#)
- [Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#)
- [Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](#)
- [Australian Charter of Health Care Rights 2019](#)

and

- [St Vincent's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan Feb 2025 – Feb 2028](#)
- [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021 – 2031](#)
- [Inclusive Victoria: State Disability Plan 2022 – 2026](#)
- [The Victorian Autism Plan](#)
- [Victorian Carer Strategy 2018 – 2022](#)
- [Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability](#)



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Who we are

St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne (SVPHM) is a Catholic not for profit tertiary referral private hospital group with integrated support and shared services which operate across four private hospital sites in Melbourne.

We are one of Melbourne's busiest and biggest acute care hospitals. We have proudly cared for the Victorian community for more than 70 years. Every year we:

- Admit 62,000+ inpatients
- Provide 43,000+ operations
- Operate 580 registered inpatient beds across four sites in Fitzroy, East Melbourne, Kew and Werribee
- Support 2,000+ families of babies delivered at St Vincent's Private Hospital Fitzroy
- Employ 2,000 EFT Staff
- Care for 330+ Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander patients

Our major specialities include: orthopaedics, cardiac services, maternity, neurosciences, and reconstructive plastic surgery. We also specialise in ear, nose and throat, paediatrics, oncology and haematology, brain and spinal, gynaecology, oral and maxillofacial and gastrointestinal.

SVPHM services the entire Melbourne metropolitan area plus rural and regional Victoria. Patients are also referred from interstate and the Asia Pacific region.

We are fortunate to be supported by 70+ Volunteers and 14+ Consumer Representatives. The hospital exists to benefit the health and well-being of the community which extends to caring for the poor and disadvantaged. The Hospital has an active social outreach program.

A welcoming culture that is positive, open and transparent is important to us. We have a Code of Conduct that sets out how we expect our staff to engage with each other and our patients. Our Access and Inclusion Plan is further strengthened by our values of Compassion, Integrity, Justice and Excellence.

Consultation

This Plan was developed with input from a variety of stakeholders and will assist us to drive meaningful and achievable improvements for our consumers and our workforce.

Who we heard from:

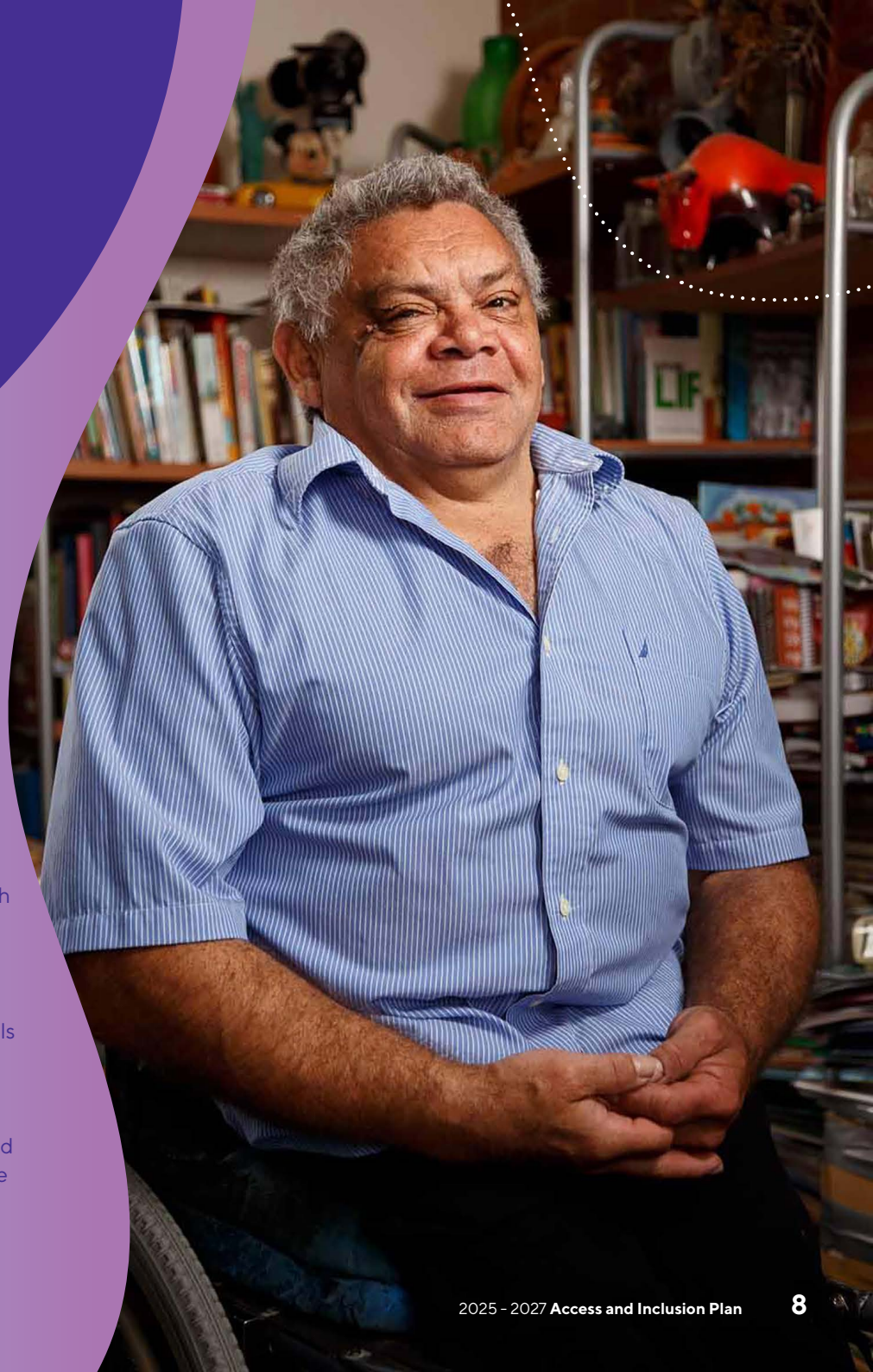
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- People from diverse cultural backgrounds and faiths
- People who do not speak English or whose preferred language is not English
- Parents / carers of children with special needs
- Adult patients with special needs
- Workforce
- Consumer Representatives

John Baxter

As a proud Latja Latja/Narungga man born with spina bifida (paraplegia), John Baxter is able to shine a light on issues relating to disability and Aboriginal healthcare experiences.

John has had several admissions to our hospitals and kindly accepted our invitation to partner with us as a Consumer Representative, a role where he is able to provide insight into his experience and how we might improve care and support for other Aboriginal people and people with disabilities.

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Our Approach

St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne will follow a phased approach to implementation of this Access and Inclusion Plan.

Year 1 (2025) will see the hospital strengthen a range of foundational activities that will have a positive impact on our patients, our community and our people. This will include establishment of an Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

Year 2 (2026) will be a phase of continued action and introduction of new initiatives across our facilities that will better serve the diverse needs of patients and staff.

Year 3 (2027) we continue with best practice efforts to provide and plan for health services that are accessible to all, now and into the future.

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The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee will bring together key staff and people with lived experience and disability expertise and a commitment to deliver this Access and Inclusion Plan. It will:

- oversee the Access and Inclusion Plan objectives and coordinate activities
- develop key performance indicators and evaluate performance against these
- integrate and action improvement activities in collaboration with relevant National Standards Committees
- report on the Access and Inclusion Plan performance at a facility governance level
- report on the Access and Inclusion Plan performance to the community
- work with stakeholders to further develop and evolve the Access and Inclusion Plan into the future



“Nothing
about us
without us”

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Priority Areas and Strategies

Priority Area 1 – Inclusive

We create an inclusive culture by ensuring representation of people with disability and other barriers to access and equity.

STRATEGIES:

- Increase the visibility, voice and representation of staff and consumers with disability and others facing barriers to better and fairer care.
- Deliver disability and diversity education to build workforce awareness, knowledge and capabilities

Priority Area 2 – Accessible

Our built environments, information and communication are accessible to people with disability and others facing barriers to access and equity.

STRATEGIES:

- Identify and address barriers to the built environment
- Identify and address barriers to appropriate equipment whilst in our care
- Improve the accessibility of information
- Improve communications regarding accessibility and access to quality and safe care

Priority Areas and Strategies

Priority Area 3 – Effective

Our actions provide effective and safe patient centred care:

STRATEGIES:

- Strengthen partnerships to inform improvements and address systemic issues
- Improve health outcomes
- Enhance patient experiences to foster an environment where all individuals feel welcome, valued and safe
- Enhance staff experiences, awareness and engagement

Parent feedback

“Everyone was so understanding, supportive and accommodating of our son’s needs. As the parents of a neurodiverse child, simple things can sometimes be the biggest headache. But we didn’t need to worry. From putting him in a room where the window didn’t look straight down (he is scared of heights) and accommodating his fear of lifts/coming up with a Plan B to get him to theatre, the attention to detail was just wonderful. In a world that is already quite difficult to navigate for our son / our family, these little things make such a big difference.”

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Developed in consultation with our patients