DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAN





We, West Wimmera Health Service, acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we operate: the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadwadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk people.

We pay our respects to the Elders past and present. We thank the traditional owners for custodianship of the land, and celebrate the continuing culture of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadwadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk people.



West Wimmera Health Service is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all people to participate, including those with diverse sexualities and genders.



ဝ့မရၢၤမုၢိန်္ဂာဆူဉ်ချ့ကရ၊ ရဲဉ်ကျဲၤလီၤကလှာ်အါဒူဉ်တၢ်ပဉ်ဃှာ် တၢ်ပညိဉ်ဆူညါသၢနံဉ်အဂိၢိန့၊် လီ၊

နမ့်၊အဲဉ်ဒိးနှုံလံဉ်တာ်ရဲဉ်ကျဲးတဘ့ဉ်အံးလ၊နကျိဉ်နှုံ ဆဲကျိဉ် ဘဉ်ဆဲးလ၊အါမံးဖံးမ၊တာ်ဖိလ၊

multiculturalworker@wwhs.net.au



Ang West Wimmera Health Service ay naghanda ng pagkakaiba-iba at plano sa pagsasama upang gabayan ang serbisyo para sa susunod na tatlong taon. Sa mga nag nanais ng kopya na tugma sa inyong lengwahe, marahil lang po sumangguni sa departamentong nito at mag email sa multiculturalworker@wwhs.net.au.

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WHY WE NEED A DIVERSITY & INCLUSION PLAN

West Wimmera Health Service strives to advance inclusion and equality across the organisation.

We recognise the importance of ensuring all members of the community feel welcome.

This plan outlines how we will embrace the diversity of cultures, ages, genders, sexualities, backgrounds, religions and abilities of all who access services or work at WWHS.

Our diversity and inclusion plan will support our purpose of

GREAT CARE EVERY PERSON EVERY TIME

Our key initiatives identify overarching priorities which will have specific actions and evaluation measures developed.

We will monitor our performance against our priorities through our Quality & Safety Governance Committee.











of people identify as Aboriginal or Torres Islanders



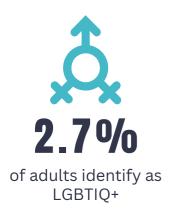
of people live with a disability or need assistance with core activities



born overseas



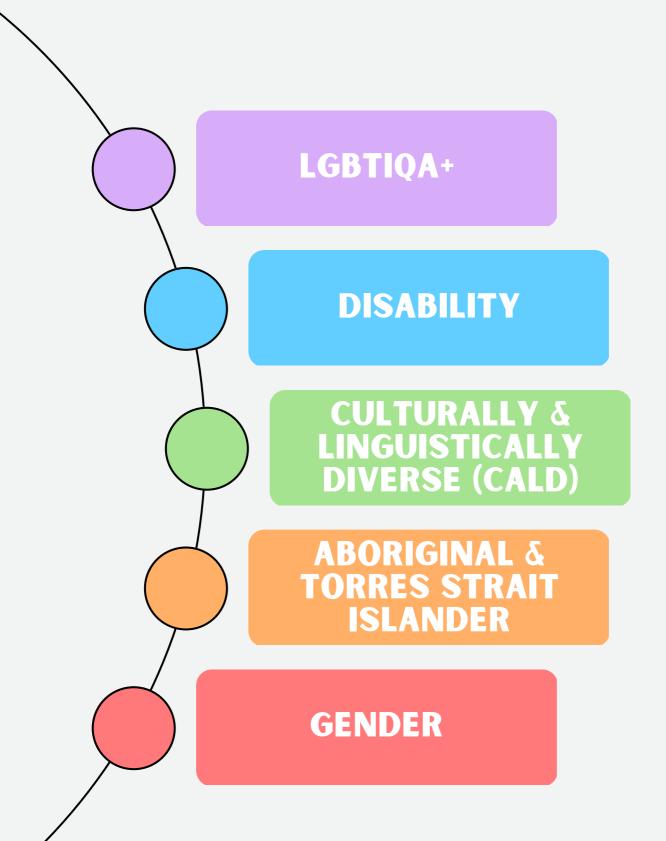
of households where a nonenglish language is used



OUR COMMUNITY



DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK



LGBTIQA+

LGBTQIA+ people should be able to readily access services where their physical and mental health outcomes are valued. This should also extend to workplaces where they are both understood and accepted. LGBTQIA+ people experience markedly higher levels of depression, anxiety, emotional distress and for some, self-harming and attempts at suicide. The discrimination, which can be actual or perceived, by services also means LGBTQIA+ people are more likely to avoid or delay seeking care. WWHS strives to provide inclusive care and support, in a safe and welcoming environment. We want the LGBTQIA+ community to know that they are welcomed and understood.

DISABILITY

Our diversity and inclusion plan addresses our obligations under the Victorian Disability Act 2006. We want to reduce the barriers to persons with a disability accessing WWHS as a patient, client or staff member and promote inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability.

CULTURALLY & LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD)

The 2021 Census shows that the Wimmera is becoming increasingly diverse. For Nhill, 21.5% of the population is now born overseas, and 7.4% of the population now speaks Karen at home. This is comprised predominantly community members who came to Australia as refugees and have high health needs due to lack of access to health care in Myanmar and lengthy stays in refugee camps. However, it also includes second-generation children born in Australia who speak Karen as their mother tongue, and who have unique cultural and health needs. WWHS is committed to increasing our cultural competency so we can care for patients from diverse cultural backgrounds in a way that is fair, equitable and accessible. This includes responding to patients' social, cultural, religious and language needs.

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

WWHS is committed to improving our ability to serve our culturally diverse communities, in particular those of the traditional owners of the land on which we operate: the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Peoples. We are actively working to identify and address barriers to using our services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

GENDER

West Wimmera Health Service is proud to deliver our first Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2026 (GEAP) approved by the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector, in alignment with the Victorian Government's Gender Equality Act 2020. The GEAP will be embedded into all aspects of the organisation to ensure that gender equality is a shared priority and responsibility of all departments across the Service and also as a responsible corporate citizen within the communities we serve. It sets out the gender equality practices and priorities to maximise the health, happiness and wellbeing of all WWHS employees and consumers.



KEY INITIATIVES LGBTIQA+

West Wimmera Health Service aims to provide a safe and inclusive environment where LGBTIQA+ members can access services, resources and support without fear of judgement or discrimination. The Service recognises that members of the LGBTIQA+ community, their biological and chosen families have unique health and wellbeing needs. The Service will continue to partner with organisations that specialise in working with the LGBTIQA+ community to gain a better understanding of these needs. It is important that LGBTIQA+ people feel empowered to communicate their health needs to ensure our organisation can deliver appropriate and person centred quality care.



01 — LGBTIQA+ AWARENESS TRAINING FOR STAFF

LGBTIQA+ awareness training has become part of our People and Culture education days. Whilst not all staff interact with consumers, WWHS believes it is important that all employees have an understanding of the challenges people face, our goals and that we display inclusive behaviour. Inclusive practice is not about changing individuals' beliefs or personal values but ensuring the services are delivered by staff in ways that are safe and inclusive. The Service will review how we can improve education to staff and actively identify and address any barriers LGBTIQA+ people may face.



02 — ACHIEVE RAINBOW TICK ACCREDITATION

West Wimmera Health Service will continue to work towards achieving the Rainbow Tick for LGBTIQA+ inclusive practice with the aim to become fully accredited. The Rainbow Tick is a quality framework that helps guide organisations to provide a safe, inclusive and affirming service for the LGBTIQA+ community. The framework incorporates six standards, that the Service will comply with by first undertaking a gap analysis. From this gap analysis, we will create an action plan to resolve any gaps identified.



KEY INITIATIVES DISABILITY

Disability is diverse. A disability may be acquired at birth or result from an accident, injury or disease. It may come and go. Many disabilities are visible, such as people using a mobility aid to get around whereas other disabilities are invisible, such as a person with a hearing impairment or psycho-social disability. The degree of a disability is different for every person and some people may have two or more types of disabilities. We understand the particular needs of each disability group and work to reduce and eliminate barriers to support inclusivity for all. WWHS will work to improve our communication with people with lived experience of disability and improve services through listening to their stories.



01 — ENSURE OUR INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE IN ACCESSIBLE FORMATS

Health literacy is a challenging issue for health services and involves both the language and format in which information is provided. WWHS will review our signage, brochures and publications and look to provide information in a variety of accessible formats. This may include easy read versions, visual icons, video and audio formations.



02 — INCREASE ACCESS TO OUR FACILITIES

WWHS is committed to ensuring access for all that enter our facilities. To understand the experience of people living with a disability, WWHS needs to understand and address access and inclusion barriers to enable the full participation of all people who visit or work at our sites. Barrier-free environments respond to diversity of access needs and enable all people, irrespective of their individual abilities, to attain their life goals.



03 — AMPLIFY VOICES AND IDEAS FOR PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

To hear directly from people with lived experience, WWHS will establish a Disability Advisory Committee that will report directly to the Board. The Advisory Committee will be a voice representing their community to assist in the review of initiatives and programs, as well as identifying future opportunities and challenges.

GULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD)

KEY INITIATIVES CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD)

To understand the experience of people from CALD communities at West Wimmera Health Service, an organisational wide cultural competency review was undertaken in September 2022.

The growing population of people from CALD backgrounds in our communities provides an opportunity for the Service to further develop organisational cultural competency, which will positively impact our staff and consumers.



01 — EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO RACE BASED DISCRIMINATION

Racism was highlighted in the review as occurring within WWHS and a number of CALD staff and consumers had experienced or witnessed racism. The Service will focus on addressing race-based discrimination through increasing visibility and understanding of our zero-tolerance stance, delivering cultural competency training and reviewing our HR policies and systems.



02 - INCREASE ACCESS TO FIRST LANGUAGE INFORMATION

WWHS is committed to ensuring clear communication for all. This requires the use of interpreters and materials in languages other than English. The service understands its role in addressing barriers and will proactively empower staff and consumers to use interpreters. We will support the literacy needs of CALD consumers by translating key documents into various languages.



03 — AMPLIFY CALD VOICES AND IDEAS

To hear directly from the CALD community, WWHS will establish a CALD advisory committee that will report directly to the Board. The advisory committee will be a voice for review of initiatives and programs as well as identifying challenges and opportunities.

A BORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS

KEY INITIATIVES ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS

We have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-Operative to provide a service that are culturally appropriate, safe, and meet the needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

The Service is proud to be working together to create culturally safe and welcoming spaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The traditional owners of the land on which we operate are the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Peoples.



01 — ABORIGINAL SELF-DETERMINATION

It is vital to provide an environment in which identifying as Aboriginal is safe and not challenged or questioned. WWHS is committed to ensuring our workforce is trained to collect accurate patient identification data in a culturally appropriate way and that policies and procedures are in place to support staff and consumers in this area.



02 — INCREASE EMPLOYEE AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, statistics and factors which have led to the inequity in life expectancy between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people is key to improving our ability to provide services that are culturally appropriate, safe and meet the needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. Information on news items, local Aboriginal organisations and other relevant resources will be readily available to staff and customers and significant cultural events such as NAIDOC week will be acknowledged and celebrated.



03 — CREATE A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

Creating familiarity for our consumers within our buildings can help them feel welcome and comfortable. With input from Aboriginal community members we will develop resources with appropriate use of language, our entrances and waiting rooms will display welcome and acknowledgment signs, flags and local Aboriginal artwork and we will seek opportunities to rename spaces, buildings and gardens with local Aboriginal names and wording.



KEY INITIATIVES GENDER EQUALITY

The West Wimmera Health Service Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2026 (GEAP) was developed in alignment with the Victorian Government's Gender Equality Act 2020.

The GEAP will be embedded into all aspects of the organisation to ensure that gender equality is a shared priority and responsibility of all departments across the Service and its partnership within the community.



01 — IMPROVE WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

Traditional views and stereotypes of the healthcare industry have contributed to a largely female workforce. To increase gender diversity in our workforce and Board we will review opportunities. These will include redesigning roles, exploring recruitment pathways and education opportunities, as well as targeted marketing strategies.



02 — IMPROVE WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY

Workplace gender equality will be achieved when people are able to access and enjoy equal rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of gender identity and other attributes. Review of our processes will identify if there are further opportunities to enhance workplace flexibility and reduce the career progression impacts that family leave can make.



03 — ELIMINATE SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

The Service has a zero tolerance for sexual harassment in the workplace. This will be reinforced by providing clear expectations of respectful workplace behaviour with a review of relevant policies, the reporting system and contact officer roles and providing appropriate training and education to staff and leaders to drive a culture of respect throughout the Service.

