

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN 2014-2016

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Approved by the Chief Executive Officer

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INTRODUCTION

Overview

Baptist Care is committed to providing high quality, client centred services when working with individuals living with a disability, and creating an inclusive work environment for all employees and volunteers.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (2009), 18.5% of Australians identify themselves as having some form of disability.

Baptist Care recognises that many people living with a disability experience difficulties when accessing services or information, and when exploring employment opportunities. While physical access is an obvious barrier, communication and attitudinal barriers can have an even greater impact. Communication barriers may include a lack of information in alternative and appropriate formats, whilst attitudinal barriers can include negative attitudes, stereotypes and assumptions.

This Disability Action Plan is a three year plan outlining strategies and actions to eliminate practices which discriminate against people with disabilities. It will also provide the organisation with a mechanism for ensuring that in all areas of employment practice and recruitment the organisation meets its obligations towards staff members and prospective staff members with disabilities. This plan is underpinned by the requirements of the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the South Australian Government's policy, 'Promoting Independence: Disability Action Plans for South Australia'.

The Baptist Care Disability Action Plan has six key outcome areas:

- Outcome 1:** Baptist Care services are accessible for people living with a disability
- Outcome 2:** Information and communication about services and programs are inclusive of people with disabilities
- Outcome 3:** Services are delivered by staff with a broad awareness and understanding of issues and needs for people living with a disability.
- Outcome 4:** People living with a disability are consulted on the planning, delivery and management of services.
- Outcome 5:** Baptist Care meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Equal Opportunity Act (1984)
- Outcome 6:** Recruitment and employment strategies are inclusive of people living with a disability

The Plan outlines a number of strategies under each of the six key outcome areas. The Baptist Care Quality & Innovation team will be responsible for monitoring progress and the organisation's level of compliance with relevant legislation.

Baptist Care welcomes your feedback. If you would like to comment on our Disability Action Plan or receive further information, please contact us at enquires@baptistcare.org.au

Definitions

Disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act, is a part of the human experience and can be experienced by anyone at any stage of their life. A person with a disability is a person who faces barriers in the social and physical environment that prevents them from fully participating in and contributing to community life.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 further defines disability as:

- a. Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- b. Total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- c. The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- d. The presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- e. The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- f. A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- g. A disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;

And includes a disability that:

- h. Presently exists; or
- i. Previously existed but no longer exists; or
- j. May exist in the future; or
- k. Is imputed to a person.

Direct Discrimination is defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992:

'A discriminator treats or proposes to treat a person with a disability, or an associate of a person with a disability, less favourably than he or she treats, or would treat a person without a disability, in the same or similar circumstances, because of the disability.'

Baptist Care

Baptist Care was formed by the amalgamation in July 2008 of Baptist Community Services (SA) Inc (BCS) and SA Baptist Homes For Aged Inc (SABH). Both of these organisations had a long history in the delivery of aged care, welfare and community services.

Today Baptist Care continues to provide a variety of services to disadvantaged and marginalised people in metropolitan and country South Australia. These services include: Aboriginal Services, Camping and Adventure Services, Chaplaincy Services, Employment, Education and Training Services, Health, Wellbeing & Ageing Services, Homelessness Services, Mental Health and Disability Services, Out of Home Care, Refugee Services, Welfare and Youth Services.

Current Initiatives

Baptist Care has already implemented a number of initiatives in the area of access and inclusion for people with a disability. These include:

- Information is available in a variety of formats, including electronic, fax or hard copy, and can be provided in large print. Information regarding the use of alternative formats has been made available to staff via the Baptist Care intranet.
- The organisation has an Access and Equity Policy which addresses barriers for individuals with disabilities.

- The Baptist Care Care Planning Policy promotes flexible, individualised models of service delivery that is tailored to meet the particular needs of individuals with disabilities. The Carers Recognition Policy also has specific input into the role of carers looking after a person with disabilities.
- Flexible working arrangements, consistent with the needs of the position, are considered in relation to meeting the needs of an employee with a disability.
- Disability accessible equipment and facilities have been established at the Baptist Care Adventure Camping Centre at Mylor.

In keeping with the principles of the *South Australian Disability Services Act (1993)*, Baptist Care is committed to the following principles:

People with disabilities

- a. Are individuals, no matter how they acquired their disability, what sort of disability they have or how severe the disability.
- b. Have the right to be respected and treated with dignity.
- c. Have the same human rights and responsibilities as any member of the Australian community.
- d. Have the same rights as any member of the Australian community to realise their potential for intellectual, physical, social, emotional, sexual and spiritual development.
- e. Have the same rights as any member of the Australian community to make their own decisions about their lifestyle.
- f. Have a right to be protected from neglect, abuse, intimidation and exploitation.
- g. 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 reasonable quality

DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

Background and Context

Development of the initial Disability Action Plan for Baptist Care commenced in late 2007. The plan was drafted by a small working group which included employees with disabilities and employees with formal qualifications in the disability sector. The draft Disability Action Plan was distributed through the management team in early 2008 for further review by staff and clients as appropriate. Feedback was collated and incorporated into the final Disability Action Plan. That plan was approved by the BCS Leadership team in February 2008. Following the commencement of Baptist Care (SA) Inc in July 2008, the plan was reviewed and updated to ensure its relevance to the new organisation.

The 2012 Disability Action Plan then expanded on the work undertaken through previous action plans developed in 2008 and 2010 and reflected on the Strategic Plan, business model and corporate restructure. The Disability Action Plan was then aligned with significant Baptist Care projects and was incorporated into the organisational Project Register.

With Baptist Care exiting from Residential Age Care in June 2013, the Disability Action Plan has again been revised in 2014 and has been adapted to focus on community services and to a more contemporary outlook of what disability means for the organisation and what is its responsibility responding to the needs of clients living with a disability.

Responsibility for Implementing the Disability Action Plan

Baptist Care Board

The Baptist Care Board is responsible for:

- Overseeing the development, implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation of the Baptist Care Disability Action Plan.
- Actively supporting and encouraging disability access and workplace diversity in Baptist Care.

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring the progress of the implementation of this plan.

Executive and Senior Management Teams

In accordance with the Baptist Care Mission, Vision and Values Statements and Code of Conduct, the Executive and Senior Manager Team members are responsible for:

- Encouraging the delivery of services in a manner that is as accessible as possible for people with a disability.
- Treating all employees and prospective employees fairly and with respect
- Selecting employees on the basis of merit
- Undertaking and monitoring tasks as designated within the Disability Action Plan

Communicating the Plan

Steps taken in communicating the Plan include:

- Initial review of the Plan by the Executive team.
- Further consultation and review by the Senior Management team.
- Distribution and consultation with all staff facilitated by senior management.
- Final approval by the Chief Executive
- The Plan is available for viewing on the Baptist Care website.

Review, Evaluation and Reporting Mechanisms

The Baptist Care Disability Action Plan will reviewed on a bi-annually basis by the Quality and Innovation department and revised at least every three years. The Plan may be amended on a more regular basis to reflect progress and any further access and inclusion issues which may be identified. The Disability Action Plan and subsequent status reports will be submitted to the Department of Social Services on request.

PLAN DETAILED

Outcome 1: Access to our Programs and Services Ensure access to services for people with disabilities.

Action	Responsibility	Review Timeline	Outcomes/Progress
1. The 'Design for Access and Mobility Standard', Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs 'Better Physical Access' guidelines and building code information have been used to develop a specific checklist (subject to Australian Building Code Amendments). This checklist is to be used when considering current building access issues and future decision making when purchasing or leasing new buildings. This checklist will also be used by Managers, the Property Services Manager and the WHS Advisor when considering new building leases and developing plans for new buildings.	Manager, Property Services, WHS Manager and Service Managers	Sept 2015	The 'Purchase or Leasing of New Premises' Policy has been reviewed to include the consideration of accessibility issues. This policy is regularly reviewed to ensure we monitor compliance issues.
2. Ensure that all Building / Architect / Engineering Consultants consider 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, WHS Manager and Service Managers	Sept 2015	The new Head Office first floor refurbishment meets disability access requirements.
3. Ensure that 'reasonable accommodation' workplace adjustments are reviewed or considered when required.	All Service Managers and Coordinators	Sept 2015	Office equipment is adjusted as required.

Outcome 2: Information and Communication about Services and Programs

Ensure that information and communication about services and programs are inclusive of people with disabilities.

Action	Responsibility	Review Timeline	Outcomes/Progress
1. Develop plain English service information at site levels, eg brochures, posters and booklets. Make changes if necessary for relevant client groups using site specific consumer advisory groups if available. Access existing brochures in other languages from public sites when required.	Managers and Coordinators, Communications Manager	Dec 2015	Corporate Plan, brochures and new website include improved visual information.
2. Maintain website 'accessibility' function on Baptist Care website. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) documents explain how to make web content accessible to people with disabilities.	Communications Manager	Dec 2015	The Baptist Care website has print adjustment icons and includes a new 'feedback' page.
3. Encourage employees to identify disability issues of concern and participate in developing solutions. Address disability issues for new employees and clients at site specific induction / introduction sessions.	Managers and Coordinators	Sept 2015	Disability information presented at Corporate orientation and site orientation phase.

Outcome 3: Delivering Advice and Services with Awareness and Understanding to People with Disabilities
Deliver advice or services to people with disabilities with awareness and understanding of issues and needs.

Action	Responsibility	Review Timeline	Outcomes/Progress
1. Ensure that all Baptist Care policies are inclusive of people with a 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.	HR & Quality teams	Ongoing	Corporate policies and procedures are checked during review process.
2. Continue to liaise with peak disability bodies e.g. National Disability Services, Disability Employment Australia (DEA), Mental Health services and Disability Employment Services.	Senior Managers, Managers and Coordinators	Ongoing	Ongoing cooperation with peak bodies.
3. Maintain participation in the annual Baptist Care Conference which addresses current issues in service provision.	Senior Managers and Managers	Sept 2015	Completed on an annual basis in conjunction with Baptist Care Circles of Excellence.
4. Promote disability awareness via acknowledging, supporting and facilitating the International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD) which is celebrated on the 3 rd of December each year and other events including Mental Health Week and various disability expos.	Senior Managers and Coordinators	Dec 2015	Promote issue on Baptist Care website and one major annual focus in newsletter

Outcome 4: Consulting with People with Disabilities about Services and Programs

Provide opportunities for consultation with people with disabilities on service delivery, complaints and quality assurance mechanisms.

Action	Responsibility	Review Timeline	Outcomes/Progress
1. Maintain a complaint and feedback system in each site and ensure people with a disability have appropriate access and education about the process.	Senior Managers and Coordinators	Dec 2015	Complaint statistics are analysed and reported (at least annually) and presented to the CEO.
2. Continue to support the participation of consumers, consumer consultants and Consumer Advisory Bodies in planning and decision making processes.	Senior Managers and Coordinators	Dec 2015	Consumers are consulted regarding service delivery issues and policy reviews eg Spina Bifida Reference Group, client focus groups
3. Use client surveys, focus groups and feedback mechanisms to ensure client needs are being met regarding access and mobility issues etc. Use information to improve services.	Senior Managers and Coordinators with support from Quality Department	Dec 2015	Surveys are completed in some Community Services sites.
4. Continue to use the Baptist Care Employee Survey to improve accessibility for people with a disability.	Senior Managers Managers	Ongoing	Print results

Outcome 5: Meeting the Requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

Ensure that Baptist care has met the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Equal Opportunity Act (1994).

Action	Responsibility	Review Timeline	Outcomes/Progress
<p>1. The Baptist Care Disability Action Plan to be reviewed with a working party which consulted organisationally to further develop the plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor and evaluate the plan on an annual basis.• Promote reviewed document within services.• Communicate plan within services.• Modifications to the plan are approved by Governance Committee.	Manager, Quality & Innovation	Dec 2015	<p>The DAP to be sent out for consultation with employees in July 2014 and considered at the Governance Committee in Sept 2014. – In progress</p> <p>An update will be included in the September Baptist News.</p>
<p>2. Ensure the Baptist care Equal Employment Opportunity Policy remains current and addresses legislative and community expectations.</p>	Manager HR	Dec 2015	Legislation updates inform changes when required.
<p>3. Work toward the development of a planned approach and a working party to establish a target for employment of people with disability at Baptist Care.</p>	Senior Managers	Dec 2015	

Outcome 6: Accessible Workplace Practices***Increase the rate of employment of people with disabilities.***

Action	Responsibility	Review Timeline	Outcomes/Progress
1. Continue to review all HR recruitment strategies including E-recruit and advertisements to ensure they provide access options for people with a disability.	Manager, RH	Dec 2015	Regular review of recruitment strategies.
2. When appropriate apply to the authorities to access support in modifying workplaces and promote the use of Employment Management & Assistance Programs.	Manager, RH	Dec 2015	EM&A Programs are used by employees to access support. Workplace modifications are accessed as required. Chaplaincy Support provided to staff needing immediate support
3. Work with accredited interpreters when working with people who have a disability from CALD backgrounds and access translating and interpreting services when required.	Senior Manager, Care Services Senior Manager, Central Manager, Quality & Innovation	Ongoing	Community Links provide ongoing support for frail young and elderly clients with a disability. Disability Services caters depending on the cultural needs of clients from CALD backgrounds Cultural awareness training for staff

FURTHER INFORMATION

What does a disability action plan do?

- Shows commitment and eliminates discrimination;
- Promotes principles of access and equity;
- Achieves service goals;
- Benefits clients residents and employees;
- Assists our organisation to comply with the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992)* and minimises the need for complaints.

Baptist Care will conduct its business in a way that:

- Promotes an increased awareness of the rights, needs, and contribution by people with disabilities as valued members of the community.
- Supports access and equity for all South Australians with disabilities and prevents discrimination on the basis of age, gender, sexuality, religion, language and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.
- Ensures that the interests of people with disabilities are always considered in the planning and provision of services.
- Takes reasonable measures to make the physical environment accessible and provides access to information and communication for people with disabilities.
- Helps us work collaboratively with people with disabilities and in partnerships with other agencies, disability advocacy groups, service providers, professional groups, educational institutions, and other community organisations to ensure that the highest levels of services appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities can be provided.
- Actively promotes within Baptist Care equal opportunities for people with disabilities in the field of employment or volunteering options. Baptist Care will negotiate reasonable accommodation workplace adjustments when required and draw upon appropriate expertise of Baptist care services e.g. Disability Services team.
- 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 disabilities.
- Advances equal opportunity for people with disabilities

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. [Department for Families and Communities – Disability Action Plan 2007-2009](#)
2. [Disability Discrimination Act Action Plans : A Guide for Non-Government Organisations](#)
3. [How to Create a Disability Action Plan](#)
4. [Access to Buildings and Services: Guidelines and Information](#)
5. [Disability Awareness & Discrimination Training Framework](#)
6. [Employment and the Disability Discrimination Act](#)
7. [Job seekers unable to work at full productivity](#)
8. [Disability Discrimination Act \(1992\)](#) (Commonwealth)
9. [Equal Opportunity Act 1984](#) (South Australia)
10. [Disability Services Act 1993](#) (South Australia)