



Government of **Western Australia**
South Metropolitan Health Service

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) Progress Report

2020 - 2021

South Metropolitan Health Service

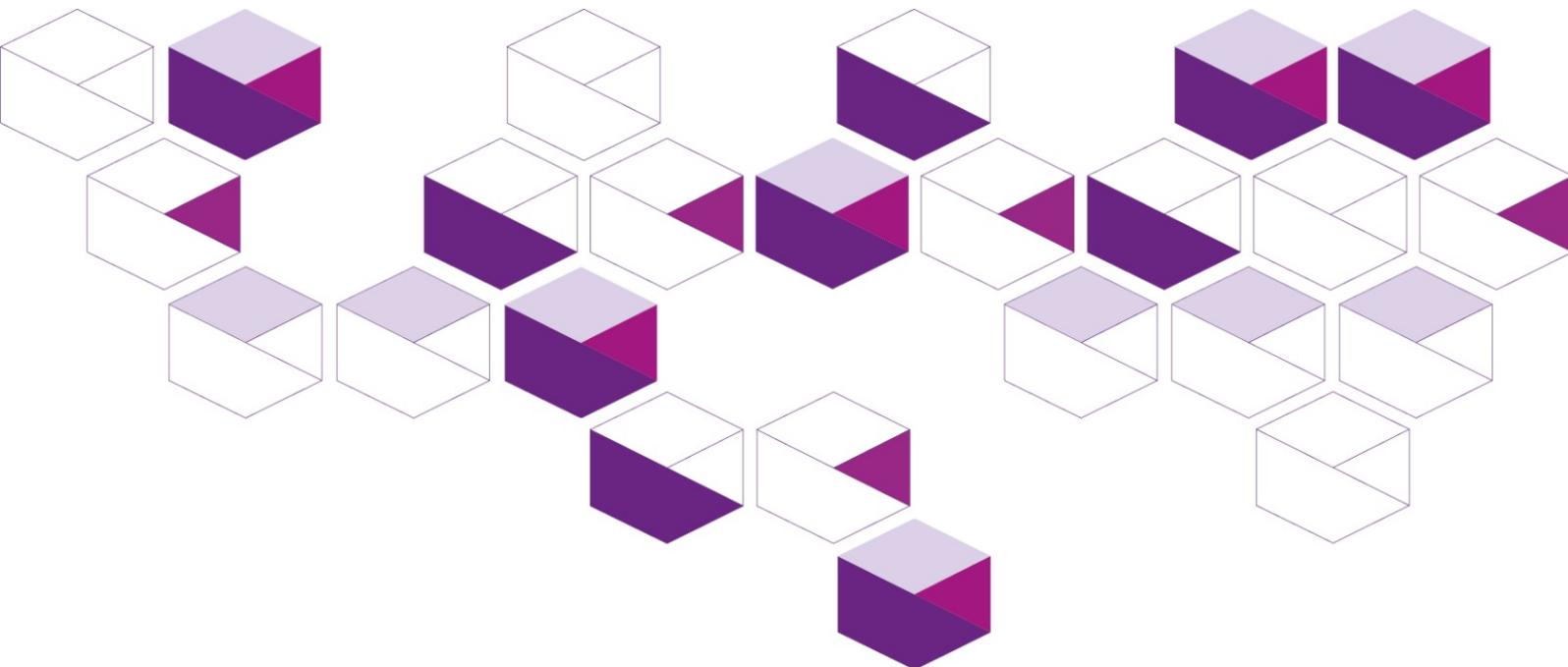


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Background

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The South Metropolitan Health Service (SMHS) delivers healthcare via hospital and community based services. Nearly a quarter of the State's population reside in the SMHS catchment area which spans nine Local Government Councils. SMHS hospital services include:

Fiona Stanley Fremantle Hospital Group (FSFHG)

- Fiona Stanley Hospital (FSH) – 783 bed tertiary hospital
- Fremantle Hospital (FH) – 300 bed specialist hospital

Rockingham Peel Group (RkPG)

- Rockingham General Hospital (RGH) – 242 bed general hospital
- Murray District Hospital (MDH) – 15 inpatient beds

Peel Health Campus (PHC) as part of Ramsay Health Care – 193 bed public and private hospital.

SMHS community services:

- Complex Needs Coordination Team (CoNeCT)
- Rehabilitation in the Home (RITH)
- Community Physiotherapy Service (CPS)

Providers contracted by SMHS who provide updates on their contribution towards disability access and inclusion are as follows:

- At Home Care Proprietary Limited
- Avivo: Live Life Incorporated
- Hills Enterprises Proprietary Limited trading as TLCU
- Orthopaedic Appliances Proprietary Limited
- Orthopaedic Prosthetic Solutions
- Radiation Oncology – GenesisCare
- St John of God Murdoch Community Hospice

Outcomes against the SMHS access and inclusion plan

The following section outlines SMHS progress against each of the seven desired outcomes for the 2020-2021 period.

Outcome 1. General services and events

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.

International Day of People with Disability 2020

On December 3 2020, SMHS co-hosted an event with the Disability Health Network to celebrate International Day of People with Disability. The theme for 2020 'Not all Disabilities are Visible' focused on spreading awareness and understanding of disabilities, acknowledging that approximately 80% of disabilities are invisible and not immediately obvious to others.

The event was opened by the Director General, Dr David Russell-Weisz, presenting the 'COVID 19 response to support people with disability'.

The Hon Stephen Dawson, former Minister for Disability Services provided updates of activities underway by Disability Services in Western Australia, including the launch of the State Disability Strategy, the Office of Disability and the new ACROD "this bay is someone's day" campaign.

Dr Ben Gauntlett, the Disability Discrimination Commissioner joined the event via videoconference to share his perspective and affirm that all people with disability have a right to be treated with dignity and respect and acknowledged the significant contribution people with disability make to the workforce and society.

Three guest speakers then presented their diverse and unique perspectives of living with disability including intellectual, sensory and physical. Sharing their stories with honesty and humour, they provided attendees the opportunity to reflect what individuals can do differently through their actions and attitudes to breakdown physical and cultural barriers.

Over 170 people attended the event in person and via videoconference including clinical and non-clinical staff from SMHS, North Metropolitan Health Service, Child and Adolescent Health Service and Department of Health. Staff from other Government agencies including the Department of Communities, Health and Disability Services Complaints Office and National Disability Insurance Agency also took part in the day. Representatives from the Health Consumers Council and Carers WA attended and there was a significant increase in the number of consumers and community members when compared to the 2019 event. 100% of attendees agreed that the presentations were interesting and a valuable use of time. The majority of attendees (96%) strongly agreed or agreed that the facilities at the venue including room size and toilets were adequate with the remaining 4% noting that this was not applicable.

Outcome 2. Buildings and facilities

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of a public authority.

Environmental improvements for patients with cognitive impairment

Fiona Stanley Hospital is working to improve access for patients with cognitive impairment (CI) through the implementation of a range of environmental improvements in ward areas.

These improvements include;

- Painting bathroom doors and trim to achieve recommended 30% difference in colour tones
- Changing current white toilet seats to colour-contrast blue
- Developing and printing CI stickers to increase visibility and assist patients to identify bathrooms, toilets and light switches

This work, building on environmental changes implemented at Fremantle Hospital, has also been implemented at Murray District Hospital (MDH).

Other environmental changes implemented at MDH to assist patients with CI include:

- Placing a patient's photograph on the bedroom door to assist with identification of their allocated area
- Installation of orientation clocks in all patient rooms
- Installation of 'Understanding Me' whiteboards behind each bedspace



The photograph above is an example of a painted door and CI friendly sticker identifying a toilet at FH.

Fremantle Hospital Services Relocation Project

Fremantle Hospital is currently undergoing an extensive relocation of several wards and clinical services. Services include the ophthalmology outpatient clinic, the physiotherapy outpatient gym

and the occupational therapy equipment store and pick up/drop-off service. Access for people with disability has been considered with improved facilities design incorporated into the planning for all of these relocations.

Changes to the configuration of bathrooms and toilets to enable better access have been planned with some already implemented in wards and departments included in the relocation. All changes have been designed following input from a range of stakeholders including a member of the FSFHG Community Advisory Council who is a member of the service redesign project working group.

Access to Outpatient Services at RkPG

A project commencing June 2021 will use hospital volunteers in the outpatient setting to assist patients to access clinics. Volunteers will receive orientation and training that will enable them to assist people with disability to access clinics.

Consumer Advisory Council biennial access audits at RkPG

The RkPG Consumer Advisory Council complete regular access audits at RkPG. As a result of audit findings, a new footpath/pavement was installed to improve access for people with disability.

Outcome 3. Information and Communication

People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Fiona Stanley Hospital COVID-19 Test Clinic

The SMHS Disability Advisory Network (DAN) identified a number of opportunities for improvement following a review of information distributed to attendees at the COVID-19 test clinic at Fiona Stanley Hospital. As a result of feedback provided by SMHS DAN, registration processes have been updated to identify attendees who require information in Easy Read formats. Large signs in Easy Read format are now also displayed in the waiting area providing important information including guidance on how to contact the Disability Information Helpline.

Outcome 4. Quality of service

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of that public authority.

SMHS Outpatient Reform Program

The SMHS Outpatient Reform Program is changing the way SMHS delivers outpatient care. An example of this is the provision of care virtually using electronic communication or information technology. 'Virtual care' (Virtual Outpatient Care) is providing patients better access to services, increased control and greater convenience, leading to improved quality of care. Patients with disability can access the same high quality care from their home as if they attended the facility in person.

The RkPG Mental Health Service uses a variety of electronic solutions to improve access for mental health consumers who may experience challenges attending clinic appointments. The Specialist Rehabilitation Team has increased their use of Telehealth to deliver relaxation group sessions and facilitate better contact with mental health professionals for patients where travel and

use of public transport is a barrier. The service is also trialling the use of electronic access to information brochures

Feedback from a survey of over 300 respondents indicates the positive response to the program;

“I have mobility issues so not always travelling into appointments is great”

“The digital appointment saved me a 11-hour round trip from Albany to Perth, just for a 15 min appointment. For people in rural areas, this is a real God send. Thank you”!

Virtual care also provides benefits for clinicians including more relaxed and engaged patients as evidenced by the following feedback from a Senior Physiotherapist:

“I’ve been able to have meaningful conversations with patients about their home rehabilitation as I can see the equipment they are using first-hand through the use of video call and tailor their treatment to suit. This use of technology is adding another string to our bow when it comes to providing clinicians with an alternative to face-to-face appointments”.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) linkage project

In February 2020, FSFHG funded a project role to focus on providing a consistent process for the State Rehabilitation Service staff to access National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funding for eligible inpatients. The development of education, tools and resources to assist clinicians to navigate the NDIS pathways in a more efficient way has facilitated timely and safe hospital discharge for patients.

The 12 month project outcomes demonstrated significant improvements in staff understanding of NDIS processes, and in the quality and quantity of clinical evidence staff submitted to support funding decisions. The project resulted in the building of collaborative inter-agency relationships with staff at the National Disability Insurance agency (NDIA) and community service providers which enabled rapid decision making by the NDIA and resulted in reduced length of stay.

The project also demonstrated reduced timeframes for NDIS decision making and plan approvals and increased confidence and skill among staff to support their patients through the NDIS journey as part of standard discharge planning processes. The benefit to patients is more timely access to the disability support they need to help them in their daily life post discharge. The project has now been expanded and a NDIS Linkage Project Team will work to translate these learning across other clinical areas of FSFHG. This will include work to better understand the unique challenges faced across different sectors of the organisation and the resultant implications to bed availability and access for patients whom are otherwise medically stable and cleared for discharge.

Outcome 5. Complaints and safeguarding

DAIP Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.

Patient feedback processes

The processes available to SMHS consumers with disability and their families to provide feedback or make complaints are firmly embedded across the organisation and include:

- An online feedback form located on the FSH, Fremantle Hospital and Health Service (FHHS) and RkPG websites that can be accessed by one click of the “Send Feedback” button at the top of the webpages.
- Care Opinion, an online social media platform for members of the public to anonymously share their story regarding their experience of receiving care from SMHS services. The website is in accordance with accessibility guidelines (size, font, colour), can be shown in a

range of languages and also provides the option for authors to share their story using pictures to describe their experience.

- Feedback forms. These are available throughout SMHS services. FSH also has paediatric and adolescent versions of these forms.
- Direct contact via telephone or in person with FSFHG Patient and Family Liaison Service or RkPG Consumer Liaison Officer.
- By post, email or internet (online feedback form)

Information is available on the SMHS, FSH, FHHS and RkPG internet sites outlining the various ways consumers can provide feedback. These sites also have contact details for external advocacy and support agencies including Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO) and Health Consumers Council WA.

Consumer feedback is a standing agenda item at the RkPG and FSFHG Disability, Access and Inclusion Committee's (DAIC) meetings. The tabled reports include resolution details to 'close the loop'.

Where the DAIC identify further opportunities to improve services, or transfer learnings across the organisation, they are included as part of the Disability, Access and Inclusion Committee Action Plan.

The following examples demonstrate the response to feedback received:

- FSH received feedback from a number of patients with disability who had experienced difficulty accessing a department within the hospital due to the weight of the door. The department is located on the main concourse, and as such must adhere to safety requirements regarding fire doors. An investigation was undertaken and alternative options identified. As a result, the current fire door will be replaced with an automated door that meets mandatory fire safety requirements.
- Access to ACROD bays within certain car parks across the FSH site has been highlighted as a concern by patients attending the hospital, particularly at busy times of the day. Long queues of traffic accessing the car park adjacent to the State Rehabilitation Service were identified as a particular issue. In response, additional parking officers have been allocated to assist ACROD holders access car parks at busy times of the day. The parking officers identify ACROD holders within the queue, and allow them priority access to the car park.

Whilst FSH complies with the required number of ACROD bays across the site, a review of their allocation is underway in response to feedback provided by consumers with disability.

Outcome 6. Consultation and engagement

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by a public authority.

SMHS Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Work on the 2022-2027 SMHS Disability Access and Inclusion Plan has commenced with the development of an engagement plan identifying key internal and external stakeholders. Engagement with these stakeholders will facilitate the identification of opportunities to improve access and equity to SMHS services for people with disability and for all members of the community. A number of engagement methods will be adopted to obtain feedback and input into the DAIP including focus groups and surveys. The information gathered will be used to identify and prioritise actions for inclusion in the 2022-2027 SMHS Disability Access and Inclusion Plan to

support the organisation to continue progress to meeting the seven desired outcomes as outlined in the Disability Services Regulations Act 2013.

SMHS Equity and Diversity Plan

The SMHS Equity and Diversity Plan (EDIP) is currently in development and has a focus on people with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The EDIP includes the strategies SMHS will implement to increase the representation of people with disability employed in the health service to the 5% target set by the Minister for Disability Services.

The plan has been developed with extensive stakeholder engagement and will soon be available on the SMHS intranet hub providing all staff in the health service the opportunity to provide input and comment.

Outcome 7. Employment, people, and culture

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

Establishment of links with external employment services

Rockingham Peel Group (RkPG) has initiated conversations with a number of external employment agencies and disability support providers to progress ongoing employment opportunities within the service for people with disability. This includes discussions with Down Syndrome WA to investigate potential traineeships for people with disability, funded through the Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA.

Job Description Form Template and Guidelines

The SMHS Job Description Form (JDF) template and guidelines have been revised and now include comprehensive information related to the organisation's values and public policy. These modifications and inclusions will assist in the uptake of values-based recruitment, providing more balanced and equitable recruitment processes for people with disability.

Values-based Recruitment Guidelines

Values-based Recruitment (VBR) guidelines and tools are currently under development by SMHS Workforce and are scheduled for implementation in 2021. Along with the JDF redesign (above) the VBR guidelines provide more balanced and equitable recruitment processes for people with disability.

SMHS Disability Employment Provider Memorandum of Understanding/Service Level Agreement

SMHS Workforce has created a Memorandum of Understanding/Service Level Agreement template for use when engaging the services of Disability Employment Providers (DEP). The document clearly articulates the duties and responsibilities of both SMHS and the DEP ensuring staff with disability are provided the necessary support and supervision they require for the duration of their employment.

Agents and Contractors

The *Disability Services Act 1993* requires authorities to take practicable measures to implement DAIPs through agents and contractors. Engaging key agents and contractors about the DAIP helps to make sure that services delivered to the public on the organisation's behalf share the values and reputation associated with SMHS' commitment to access and inclusion.

The following methods are used by SMHS Contract Management to support the SMHS DAIP:

- Informing agents and contractors about the DAIP through contracts or agreements
- Requiring agents and contractors to implement a DAIP or have access and inclusion policies and procedures
- Requiring an annual report on DAIP related activities
- Providing training or resources

Significant DAIP activities driven or led by SMHS agents and contractors in 2020-21 are described below:

Outcome 1 - People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access services and events.

- Avivo Live Life Incorporated: The impact of COVID has meant that few events were able to be held in person over the 2020-21 year. Moving to online events has meant that access to events by people with disability increased. To facilitate access, support and assistance was provided to those attendees needing help with technology. Moving to this mode of event delivery created greater equality of access to events.

Staff ensure that when planning physical events and services for customers and their families the venue is accessible and suitable for people with disabilities. Accommodating virtual access in conjunction with face to face attendance is also considered.

- Peel Health Campus is a single level facility with designated ACROD parking bays in close proximity to hospital entrance points for both visitors and staff. An activity involving Consumer Board of Advice representation is underway to explore opportunities for improvement in relation to hospital access and way-finding for people with disabilities.

Outcome 3 - People with disability receive information in a format that will enable them to access information as readily as other people are able to access it.

- Avivo Live Life Incorporated have updated their website to include accessible and inclusive design concepts. An ongoing review process allows for continuous improvement in the availability of information available.

Throughout COVID -19, the website has been a key source of information for consumers. During this period, more vulnerable consumers and their unique requirements have been identified to ensure information is accessible and presented in a way that makes sense to them including the use of text messages.

Outcome 7 - People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

- Avivo Live Life Incorporated recently engaged two new Disability Employment Officers. Their role is to:
 - support recruitment and employment practices to be more inclusive of people with disability
 - educate and support colleagues at all levels on inclusive practices
 - mentor colleagues especially those colleagues who identify as having a disability.

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.

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