# Absolutely everyone

**State disability plan annual report 2017**

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Where the term "Aboriginal" is used it refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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# MINISTER'S FOREWORD

The release of Absolutely everyone: State disability plan 2017–2020 signalled the Victorian Government's ambition to deliver real change for people with disability in Victoria.

That ambition is not diminished by the phased introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Victoria. Around 100,000 Victorian people with disability will enter the scheme, but in total there are more than a million Victorians with disability. All Victorians with disability will continue to rely on the mainstream services that we provide. Victoria has a continuing role in maximising the benefits the scheme can deliver for all people with disability in this state. The state disability plan recognises that much needs to be done. It also recognises that the best way to measure progress will be to look at the outcomes experienced by people with disability over time across areas such as health, education, employment, housing and safety.

What we do as a government to implement the plan is critical. How we report back to you on the progress we are making is just as important.

We need to let Victorians know where real change is happening. We need to be accountable where more needs to be done. And we need to be able to look at outcomes over the longer term and ask ourselves if the investments we are making and the policies we are supporting are the right ones.

To give the Victorian people accurate, timely and transparent reporting, the plan has committed to ongoing public reports.

To increase the profile of this reporting, I have further committed to having these annual reports tabled in the Victorian Parliament.

This approach promotes scrutiny and debate. It acknowledges that annual public reporting is of critical importance to advocates and self-advocates, and can support the reach and persuasiveness of their voices.

Absolutely everyone introduced an outcomes framework to allow Victoria to focus its efforts on meaningful improvements in the day-to-day lives of people with disability.

It also committed to developing indicators and measures to allow the long-term measurement of outcomes for people with disability.

I am pleased to introduce these new indicators and measures in the current report.

The indicators and measures are person-focused. They are constructed around the experience of people with disability, rather than our government's services, policies and investments.

For many measures, we already have national and state data that can begin telling us about what is happening and where we need to direct our efforts.

For others, data sources will need to be enhanced or created. In some cases this work will take years. But we believe that these are the right things to measure and report on, and that the effort and time will be amply justified.

Victoria needs to benefit from the talents, experiences and ambitions of people with disability.

However, it can only realise those benefits if it becomes a fairer and more inclusive place.

This report is another step towards that goal.

I am delighted to commend the report to your attention.

Martin Foley  
Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing

# INTRODUCTION

Absolutely everyone is the Victorian Government's state disability plan 2017–2020. Our vision for the plan is an inclusive Victoria that supports people with disability to live satisfying everyday lives.

All Victorian Government departments contributed to developing Absolutely everyone, which commits to a range of actions in partnership with the community.

Departments are responsible for implementing the plan's framework and are accountable for its actions and outcomes.

Partnership arrangements between government departments, agencies and authorities are key to the success of the plan. Together, we are working to ensure full equality, inclusion and participation in society for Victorians with disability.

This first Absolutely everyone annual report looks at our progress against the actions and priorities for each pillar over 2017, and presents the performance indicators and measures developed for the Absolutely everyone outcomes framework. Absolutely everyone was developed after extensive consultation with people with disability.

People with disability told us that the plan needed to include a whole-of-government approach that addresses the interrelated issues that affect people with disability in their everyday lives.

The actions we are taking under Absolutely everyone are based on the four pillars of an everyday life that people with disability told us are important to them:

* inclusive communities
* health, housing and wellbeing
* fairness and safety
* contributing lives.

# OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK AND MEASURES AND INDICATORS

Absolutely everyone introduced an outcomes framework built around the four pillars of the plan.

**Vision**

An inclusive Victoria which supports people with disability to live satisfying everyday lives

| **Domains** | **Outcomes** |
| --- | --- |
| Inclusive communities | * **Connection** – people with disability are active participants in communities aligned with their interests and identities * **Inclusion** – Victoria's communities and places are welcoming and inclusive for people with disability * **Accessibility** – the built and natural environment is accessible to Victorians with disability * **Mobility** – people with disability are able to move around and get to the places they want to go |
| Health, housing and wellbeing | * **Health** – people with disability achieve their optimal mental and physical health * **Housing** – people with disability have housing choices that are flexible, suitable, affordable and accessible * **Wellbeing** – people with disability experience a high level of wellbeing in all aspects of their lives |
| Fairness and safety | * **Respect** – people with disability are as recognised and respected as any other citizen * **Safety** – people with disability live in safety and feel secure and protected * **Opportunity** – people with disability have equal opportunities to identify, pursue and achieve their aspirations |
| Contributing lives | * **Education and skills** – people with disability actively engage and succeed in education and learning * **Employment** – people with disability are engaged in flexible and sustainable employment and have opportunities to develop and succeed * **Economic independence** – people with disability generate income through employment, business ownership and entrepreneurship and participate freely as consumers * **Influence** – people with disability hold positions of leadership and responsibility across the private, public and community sectors |

*Absolutely everyone* also committed to developing indicators and measures to support its monitoring.

A selection of key indicators and measures is outlined below. The full set of indicators and measures, along with supporting information, is provided in **Appendix 1**. Wherever possible, baseline data has been noted against measures.

## Inclusive communities

| **Outcome** | **Indicator** | **Measure** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Connection: People with disability are active participants in communities aligned with their interests and identities | Increase social connections | Proportion of people with disability who report they are involved in a social group |
| Inclusion: Victoria's communities and places are welcoming and inclusive for people with disability | Increase positive community attitudes | Increase in positive community attitudes towards people with disability |
| Accessibility: The built and natural environment is accessible to Victorians with disability | Increase public transport accessibility | Proportion of buses that are accessible |
| Accessibility: The built and natural environment is accessible to Victorians with disability | Increase public transport accessibility | Proportion of public transport stops that are accessible |
| Accessibility: The built and natural environment is accessible to Victorians with disability | Increase spaces and places with universal design | Proportion of dwellings in Victoria that are built according to principles of universal design |
| Mobility: People with disability are able to move around and get to the places they want to go | Increase access to transport | Proportion of people with disability who are not able to use some or any form of public transport |
| Mobility: People with disability are able to move around and get to the places they want to go | Increase access to transport | Proportion of people with disability who had trouble getting a job due to transport problems or are not looking for work due to lack of transport |
| Mobility: People with disability are able to move around and get to the places they want to go | Increase mobility | Proportion of people with disability who report being able to make at least one trip away from home per day |

## Health, housing and wellbeing

| **Outcome** | **Indicator** | **Measure** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Health: People with disability achieve their optimal mental and physical wellbeing | Increase physical health | Proportion of people with disability who report either very good or excellent self-rated health |
| Health: People with disability achieve their optimal mental and physical wellbeing | Increase mental health | Proportion of people with disability who report psychological distress |
| Housing: People with disability have housing choices that are flexible, suitable, affordable and accessible | Increase affordable housing for people with disability | Proportion of people with disability who are in the lowest 40% of the income distribution whose housing costs exceed 30% of their household income |
| Housing: People with disability have housing choices that are flexible, suitable, affordable and accessible | Increase stable and secure housing | Proportion of people with disability who report being able to pay their rent or mortgage on time |
| Housing: People with disability have housing choices that are flexible, suitable, affordable and accessible | Increase suitable housing | Proportion of people with disability who report being satisfied with the home in which they live |
| Wellbeing: People with disability experience a high level of wellbeing in all aspects of their lives | Increase overall life satisfaction | Proportion of people with disability who report overall life satisfaction being 7 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10 |

## Fairness and safety

| **Outcome** | **Indicator** | **Measure** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respect: People with disability are as recognised and respected as any other citizen | Decrease disability-related discrimination | Proportion of people with disability reporting disability-related discrimination in the last 12 months |
| Respect: People with disability are as recognised and respected as any other citizen | Increase community safety | Proportion of people with disability who report feeling unsafe at home after dark |
| Respect: People with disability are as recognised and respected as any other citizen | Increase community safety | Proportion of people with disability experiencing at least one incident of crime in the past 12 months |
| Respect: People with disability are as recognised and respected as any other citizen | Reduce experiences of interpersonal violence | Proportion of people with disability experiencing physical violence |
| Respect: People with disability are as recognised and respected as any other citizen | Reduce experiences of interpersonal violence | Proportion of people with disability experiencing stalking and harassment |
| Respect: People with disability are as recognised and respected as any other citizen | Reduce experiences of interpersonal violence | Proportion of people with disability experiencing sexual violence |
| Respect: People with disability are as recognised and respected as any other citizen | Reduce prevalence and impact of abuse and neglect | Proportion of people with disability experiencing abuse or neglect in the past 12 months |
| Opportunity: People with disability have equal opportunities to identify, pursue and achieve their aspirations | Increase opportunities to pursue and achieve aspirations | Proportion of people with disability who feel they are satisfied with what they are achieving in life |

## Contributing lives

| **Outcome** | **Indicator** | **Measure** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Employment: People with disability are engaged in flexible and sustainable employment and have opportunities to develop and succeed | Increase employment | Proportion of people with disability who report being employed |
| Employment: People with disability are engaged in flexible and sustainable employment and have opportunities to develop and succeed | Increase job quality | Overall job quality – Proportion of people with disability who are employed in low-quality jobs (at least one of: low job control, high job demand, high job insecurity, low fairness of pay) |
| Employment: People with disability are engaged in flexible and sustainable employment and have opportunities to develop and succeed | Increase job quality | Proportion of people with disability who feel they have a low fairness of pay |
| Economic independence: People with disability generate income through employment, business ownership and entrepreneurship and participate freely as consumers | Improve financial stability and economic independence | Median income of people with disability |
| Economic independence: People with disability generate income through employment, business ownership and entrepreneurship and participate freely as consumers | Improve financial stability and economic independence | Proportion of people with disability who report not being able to pay their electricity, gas or telephone bills on time |
| Influence: People with disability hold positions of leadership and responsibility across the private, public and community sectors | Increase involvement in civic activities | Proportion of people with disability who report being involved in a civic or political group  Proportion of people with disability who report they are able to have a say within the general community on important issues |
| Influence: People with disability hold positions of leadership and responsibility across the private, public and community sectors | Increase leadership opportunities | Increase in proportion of people with disability in senior roles of influence (public and private) |

# BASELINE DATA

Key baseline data for the indicators and measures introduced in this annual report is presented below.

## Inclusive communities

* 16.8% of people with disability are not able to use some or any form of public transport

People with disability are less likely to report

* satisfaction with feeling part of their community  
  82 people with disability for every 100 people without disability  
  Source: CIS 2015

## Health, housing and wellbeing

People with disability are

* 1.3 times more likely to be in unaffordable housing
* 2.4 times more likely not to be able to pay rent or mortgage on time
* 2 times more likely to be dissatisfied with their housing  
  Source: HILDA 2016
* 1.9 times more likely to report psychological distress  
  Source: HILDA 2016

People with disability are less likely to report

* high life satisfaction  
  76 people with disability for every 100 people without disability  
  Source: CIS 2015
* high wellbeing  
  70 people with disability for every 100 people without disability  
  Source: CIS 2015
* very good or excellent self-rated health  
  60 people with disability for every 100 people without disability  
  Source: NHS 2015

## Fairness and safety

* 13.5% of people with disability reported disability-related discrimination in the last 12 months  
  Source: SDAC 2015

People with disability are

* 2.2 times more likely to report feeling unsafe at home after dark  
  Source: GSS 2014
* less likely to report being satisfied with what they are achieving in life  
  73 people with disability for every 100 people without disability  
  Source: CIS 2015

### Contributing lives

People with disability are

* less likely to be employed 66 people with disability for every 100 people without disability  
  Source: SDAC comparison
* 2.3 times more likely not to be able to pay electricity, gas or telephone bills on time  
  Source: HILDA 2016
* 1.5 times more likely to be in low-quality jobs
* 1.5 times more likely to be in the lowest income distribution

CIS Vic Health Community Indicators Survey  
GSS General Social Survey  
HILDA Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Australia  
NHS National Health Survey  
SDAC Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers

# DELIVERING ON THE VISION

In the first year of Absolutely everyone, significant progress has been made against the actions and key priorities of the plan. These are highlighted in the pages that follow.

## INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

"I feel included"

The experience of inclusion is central to living a satisfying everyday life.

We are working to create physical and social infrastructure that allows every Victorian access to opportunities and experiences wherever they live and whatever their personal circumstances.

The key priorities directly address the need for attitudinal change, good universal design, accessible public transport and inclusion in schools. We have made progress to support the full inclusion of people with disability on their terms.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Public Transport Access Committee, which has 11 members from the disability sector and an independent chair, was re-established in 2016–17 to provide the Minister for Public Transport with independent strategic advice on public transport accessibility issues.

Following a successful 12-month initial period, the minister extended the committee members' terms to the end of July 2019.

The committee's achievements in 2016–17 include:

* representing the accessibility community in the Victorian Government's Major Transport Infrastructure Program (this includes working with Transport for Victoria, Public Transport Victoria, the Level Crossing Removal Authority and the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority)
* input into design policies and technical requirements for transport infrastructure and planning
* engagement on rideshare reforms and other point-to-point transport services
* working with Public Transport Victoria and operators to improve authorised officers' capacity to recognise and understand passengers with specific individual needs
* supporting the government's commitment to building more Changing Places facilities across Victoria.

Public Transport Victoria changed bus stop design specifications to meet or exceed standards in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992. During the year, 700 new and upgraded accessible bus stops were delivered.

Consultation was completed to identify the best locations to install new Changing Places facilities, and construction of a facility at Frankston Train Station began. As part of the Melbourne Tunnel Project, four Changing Places facilities have been confirmed at three new stations – Parkville, CBD North and Domain.

*"He can now see a future that includes employment and independent living."*

*"My son is 14 years old and has severe cerebral palsy. He loves to visit Eastland Shopping Centre and Ringwood Lake where he knows that his personal needs will be met.*

*Prior to Changing Places being installed we had to resort to going home or attempt to change my son in the car, which is extremely difficult.*

*Changing Places has changed not only my son's life but also all of the family. With every Changing Places toilet built, our options increase along with my son's confidence.*

*He can now see a future that includes employment and independent living."*

Mother of a child with disability

*"Having Changing Places within Melbourne and Olympic Parks means I don't have to leave the precinct and can spend less time walking to a toilet and it will reduce the amount of tennis I miss. I also visit regularly for concerts, and if I need the toilet it is there when needed and I can remain comfortable whilst out in the community.*

*It shouldn't be a privilege [to go to the toilet], it is a right.  
We need Changing Places to go places."*

Liz Ellis

### INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

The Victorian Government's Inclusive Schools Fund is a $20 million fund established for government schools to implement innovative projects that will increase participation and improve learning outcomes for students with disability. The fund provides up to $200,000 per project.

Since 2015–16, 88 projects have been funded through three rounds.

Chelsea Heights Primary School was funded for two separate projects totalling $400,000 through rounds 1 and 2 of the Inclusive Schools Fund.

In round 1, the school was allocated $200,000 to redevelop an existing multipurpose building that will provide:

* a designated indoor/outdoor learning space with a focus on sensory stimulation
* new high-visibility office spaces
* a multipurpose learning area to support social and emotional wellbeing.

The school was allocated an additional $200,000 in round 2 of the fund to build an indoor/outdoor learning environment, accessible toilets and outdoor sensory garden.

*"This funding is about transforming hundreds of young lives over the next four years by giving schools the opportunity to realise their vision for a truly inclusive school. Inclusive education is all about giving students with disabilities the same chances as other students who do not face the additional challenges of a disability."*

Jaala Pulford, State Member for Western Victoria on the Maryborough Education Centre receiving $200,000 in round 2 of the Inclusive Schools Fund to create an inclusive, environmentally sustainable sensory play and learning space

Transcribers Note: An aerial photograph of the Armstrong Creek School is shown with the caption "The new Armstrong Creek School is an exciting social infrastructure hub. The inclusive school provides new facilities, combining primary (P-6) and special (P-12) school elements under one governance model."

*"We have been working with integration and teaching staff, as well as parents, to address the needs of students who find it difficult to remain on task during explicit teaching and independent learning tasks. Thanks to the Inclusive Schools Fund, we are able to provide a designated space that can be used as an intervention strategy for students who are disengaged, or who require a space where they can self-regulate with the support of an adult."*

Jane Satchwell,  
Chelsea Heights Primary School Principal

### BUILDING REQUIREMENTS

The Building Quality Standards Handbook, used by architects and builders for all government school building projects, was updated to ensure high-quality and consistent school facilities across Victoria that reflect our commitment to removing barriers to participation and promoting inclusion. All principal consultants engaged for new school or upgrade projects must consider the handbook's universal design principles.

The Better apartments design standards were introduced to improve the liveability of apartments for older people or people with disability. These require that at least half of new apartment dwellings have bathrooms, door openings and passageways that are accessible to people with limited mobility, including older people and people living with disability.

We advocated strengthening the National construction code for all new private dwellings. In April 2017, the Building Ministers' Forum agreed to consider this minimum accessibility standard.

### COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Metropolitan Partnerships was launched in June 2017 as a new and coordinated way for communities to advise government on what matters in their region.

This includes incorporating the views of people living with disability, with a focus on social inclusion.

The City of Wodonga partnered with Deakin University to facilitate a series of community forums during the development of the council's disability action plan. The forums acknowledged the complex and dynamic nature of issues around access, participation and inclusion in community life.

Specialised software mapped the local systems that identify these issues for people living with disability in Wodonga, which were included in the plan.

*"The workshops assisted us to do systemic advocacy on a local level as we worked collaboratively on issues like accessible and affordable housing, transport and inclusive community."*

Martin Butcher,  
Executive Officer, Wodonga City Council

### REFUGEES

We worked with the AMES Australia disability action group to establish strong working relationships with health, disability, settlement, government and community stakeholders to address the immediate on-arrival needs of refugees with disability.

The Victorian Government funded the Victorian Refugee Health Network to conduct a service needs assessment for people from refugee backgrounds with disability in the northern metropolitan region. Recommendations were linked with other government strategies and program areas.

### VETERANS

We are working with ex-service organisations, councils and community groups to provide information about disability access during events and when war memorials are being restored in communities.

Information is provided to successful grant recipients to help them comply with best practice approaches for disability access.

### NDIS AND DIVERSITY

We have committed resources to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) until the full transition on 1 July 2019.

We have a joint agreement with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and the Commonwealth Government to ensure a smooth transition for clients and to help service providers prepare.

Victorian Sector Development Fund initiatives were introduced to build capacity in rural and regional communities and among culturally and linguistically diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Wimmera South West NDIS Participant Readiness Project helped local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to understand the NDIS and to support registration and participation.

Birri/Gubba Urangan woman, and Deaf Indigenous Community Consultant, Jody Barney led the project. Jody has more than 25 years of professional training and skills in working with these communities.

## HEALTH, HOUSING AND WELLBEING

"I live well"

Living in stable, affordable and accessible housing, and having access to appropriate health care and sport and recreation opportunities, is key to people's health and wellbeing.

We are working to make these core rights and services more accessible and better suited to people with disability.

We also continue to advocate for better maternal, child, family, youth and aged persons' health care that meets the needs of people with disability.

### HEALTH SERVICES

We are taking a sector-wide approach to reinvigorating disability action plans across public and community health services. This includes making more effective use of policy and funding guidelines to set expectations around disability action planning. We are also using "quality reports" to identify good practice initiatives that can be more widely promoted.

Bendigo Health has undertaken a project in collaboration with other healthcare providers in the Loddon Mallee region and the Department of Health and Human Services to improve the access to and responsiveness of health services for people with disability.

Bendigo Health's emergency department provides an advisory service to outlying hospitals, nursing homes, general practices and acute care facilities. The service is used to expedite transfer and admission, or to discuss the best referral method to access acute care for patients.

A trial was undertaken to expand the service by providing advice via telehealth for patients who may exhibit challenging behaviours in some hospital settings.

During the trial, a father whose child usually requires maximum assistance to visit a hospital or GP (such as a police and ambulance escort) was able to collect the medication required after a diagnosis and treatment was made possible via telehealth.

*"For people like my son who are not able to access the emergency department or even a GP easily, telehealth is the answer. Instead of calling police, ambulance and his carer to sedate and bring him to the ED, I was able to go and collect the medication he needed. This is easy."*

Father of a child with disability

### HOUSING

We have undertaken the following actions to address the need for affordable, suitable and secure housing for people with disability:

* secured the largest ever Victorian investment in housing affordability
* committed over $820 million since March 2016 in additional housing and homelessness support for low-income and vulnerable Victorians, including those with disability (this builds on $2.1 billion of financial instruments to support the community housing sector).

This will deliver around 6,000 new social and affordable housing properties, including the renewal of up to 2,500 ageing public housing dwellings, and support up to 19,000 people at risk of homelessness.

The Victorian Housing Register was launched in 2017, allowing people to complete a single, streamlined online application for a wider range of social housing options.

The register prioritises people with an urgent need for housing assistance, including people with disability who receive independent living assistance or care.

### HEALTH PROMOTION

We provided funding to Women with Disabilities Victoria to identify how sexual and reproductive health of women with disability can be improved.

Family Planning Victoria developed a disability-specific educational resource about reproductive and sexual health for use in schools.

*"An amazing resource that is scaffolded and provides a great insight into the topic. A good array of progressive lessons to work through with on a range of levels."*

Secondary teacher, Bulleen Heights School

We are supporting BreastScreen Victoria to update the breast screening disability policy.

Developing and testing of an online resource for disability services began in 2017 in partnership with Dental Health Services Victoria to support good oral health. This work will be completed in 2019.

Two specialist teams were established to help people with high support needs to access specialist, community-based mental health assessment and treatment.

Funding was provided to all 13 child and adolescent mental health services in Victoria to support children with dual disability or with severe disruptive disorders as well as their families and caregivers.

### VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

In the 2016–17 State Budget, $33.9 million over two years was allocated to develop an intensive early years support service. The service will draw on existing initiatives Cradle to Kinder, Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies and right@home.

The service will improve the integration of support, including earlier intervention, for vulnerable and at-risk families such as those with parents with disability.

### PARKS ACCESS

Improvements at Victorian parks were made in 2016–17 so people with disability can participate in more outdoor recreation activities. These include:

* nature-based activities in an accessible Junior Ranger Program at Wilsons Promontory National Park
* construction of an accessible self-contained unit by Parks Victoria for visitors of all abilities at Tidal River, Wilsons Promontory National Park
* accessible amenities at Arthurs Seat State Park that includes a Changing Places facility
* new wheelchair-accessible gas barbeques installed at Cardinia Reservoir Park
* TrailRider chairs for walking trails in the Yarra Valley and the Dandenong Ranges National Park
* escorted group walks for blind and vision-impaired visitors at Brimbank Park and the Rhododendron Gardens
* carer activities held at Werribee Park and Albert Park in partnership with Brainlink
* bush therapy programs for young people in the Alpine National Park, in partnership with MIND Australia.

*"The inclusion of human diversity forms the foundation of our community. Disability is not rare – it can happen to any one of us. Having fully accessible amenities, such as those provided by Parks Victoria at Arthurs Seat, helps people with disabilities to fully participate in society."*

Karen Fankhauser,  
Vice Chair, Mornington Peninsula All Abilities Consultative Committee

Transcribers Note: A photograph is shown of a person in a wheelchair being assisted onto a ropes course (tethered around the waist to a cable above) captioned "Camp Manyung universally designed ropes course – a Tourism/Inclusive Culture/ Mobility Gold award winner at the 2017 International Association for Universal Design Awards."

### SPORT AND RECREATION

More than 50 organisations received funding through the Access for All Abilities component of the Supporting Victorian Sport and Recreation Program 2016–19.

In 2016–17, the combined effort of funded organisations resulted in:

* more than 295 coaches, instructors and volunteers trained to deliver inclusive sport opportunities
* 215 programs involving more than 8,400 participants with disability.

Cricket Victoria held the National Cricket Inclusion Championships for cricketers with disability involving 95 players. With Victorian Government support, these championships will be hosted in Geelong for the next three years.

### NDIS

The Victorian Government is supporting people with disability and their families who transition to the NDIS, providing $10 million in funding to deliver readiness activities.

An intensive support team was established to help people with complex needs transition to the NDIS.

A pilot project to identify and respond to Aboriginal people with disability began in 2017, and workshops were held for Aboriginal communities to understand the NDIS transition.

Seed funding was provided to the Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) and RMIT University to establish the Future Social Service Institute, positioning Victoria to produce highly skilled support workers and carers.

*"The institute will engage in meaningful dialogue with social service organisations, existing support workers and care receivers, and partner with them to co-design the course curriculum."*

VCOSS CEO  
Emma King

At the end of September 2017, 19,506 Victorians had transitioned to the NDIS. An estimated 105,324 Victorians will be NDIS participants by the time it is fully rolled out in July 2019.

We worked closely to prepare participants, providers and the workforce ahead of each transitioning area. This included a range of readiness sessions and the timely transfer of client information and knowledge.

Readiness planning is underway across mainstream services to ensure they interface with the NDIS in a coordinated and streamlined way.

Readiness planning will help create better connections between the NDIS and Victorian Government services, improving service delivery for NDIS participants, maximising the value of the NDIS for Victoria and supporting the long-term sustainability of the scheme.

Keeping our sector strong is Victoria's workforce plan for the NDIS.

The plan is supported by a $26 million investment and comprises nine workforce attraction, development, training and skills priorities, with the aim to grow and develop the NDIS workforce during transition to the full scheme.

Project highlights for 2016–17 include:

* developing the Supervision and delegation framework for allied health assistants and support workers in disability and accompanying pilot of the training program to assist allied health professionals to delegate tasks to disability workers
* beginning a longitudinal research project with the objective of understanding workforce experiences as they transition to the NDIS
* an initial review of current disability-related training package qualifications to ensure they are fit-for-purpose for the NDIS environment.

E-learning module, Communicating with people with disability in a healthcare setting, is a collaborative development led by Wimmera Rural Access through the Building Inclusive Communities Program.

Launched in July 2017, the no-cost module addresses issues that hospitals can encounter when providing services to people with disability who may have additional communication needs.

Better communication between hospital staff and patients with disability will achieve better health outcomes, improve the hospital experience for patients, and help hospitals meet their healthcare standards.

## FAIRNESS AND SAFETY

"I get a fair go"

The Victorian Government wants to create opportunities for all Victorians. We want all Victorians with disability to live safely in their communities and have access to support that treats them fairly.

It is important that the rights of all Victorians with disability under existing legislation are not diminished during the transition to the NDIS. This includes rights under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

Our community disability advocacy and self-advocacy sector is a crucial part of our safeguards system, giving people with disability a vital avenue for having their voice respected.

### FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Victorian family violence data framework has been developed to improve and standardise family violence data collection across the Victorian Government and collaborating agencies.

We are working with a range of stakeholders including Brain Injury Australia on research into the prevalence of acquired brain injury among family violence victims and perpetrators to help patients receive proper management and better outcomes.

We are also working with RMIT to review our refuge facilities. The design for new "core and cluster" facilities will include features for added comfort and accessibility for people with disability.

Access to the Family Violence Flexible Support Packages has been expanded and eligibility for the Victorian Disability Family Violence Crisis Response Initiative extended.

Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and violence against women has been developed with a focus on prevention in diverse communities, including people with disability.

### DISABILITY ADVOCACY

Victoria is undertaking a staged process of advocacy reform.

A $1.5 million fixed-term investment supported 21 advocacy initiatives across 15 organisations. Initiatives focused on:

* self-advocacy to support people with disability to speak up for their rights
* advocacy for Aboriginal communities
* improved advocacy in rural and regional areas
* advocacy for migrants, refugees and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or intersex (LGBTI) communities.

Additionally, through the 2017–18 Victorian State Budget, a further $1.4 million will be provided via the Disability Advocacy Sector Capacity Building Fund. This will build on the Innovation Fund and provide increased access to advocacy for people with disability and their families when and where they need it.

### SAFEGUARDS

Development of the Victorian disability abuse prevention strategy is underway to support the 2017 implementation of a zero tolerance of abuse in disability services. The strategy will include introducing Victoria's first code of conduct for disability workers.

We have also committed to establishing an independent, legislated Victorian registration and accreditation scheme for the disability workforce. This scheme will protect the rights of vulnerable people from harm, and support the development and growth of a quality disability workforce by making sure workers who support people with disability have the right skills, experience and qualifications.

From 1 November 2017, the Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme was expanded to:

* include all disability services, not just disability residential services
* broaden the definition of disability worker to include supervisors and managers
* require all disability service providers to check their existing staff against the

Disability Worker Exclusion List, not just prospective employees. The Responding to allegations of abuse involving people with disabilities guidelines were completed in 2017 in partnership with Victoria Police. These guidelines will clarify the respective roles, responsibilities, procedures and interactions involving disability service providers and Victoria Police when dealing with allegations of abuse.

### VCAT ACCESSIBILITY

The Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal's (VCAT's) Accessibility action plan 2018–22 was launched in February 2018.

In preparation for the plan's development, VCAT completed the following actions in 2016–17:

* a review of the national and international accessibility action plans, including internal and external surveys
* consultation with VCAT's external stakeholders
* four internal workshops with members and staff.

### VICTORIA POLICE

In September 2017, a protocol between Victoria Police and the Disability Services Commissioner was signed for responding to allegations of abuse perpetrated against people with disability. The protocol has been in operation since that date.

Victoria Police is implementing the eight recommendations from the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's Beyond doubt report.

A memorandum of understanding between Victoria Police and the Department of Health and Human Services has been signed, providing the overarching protocol between the two departments.

The Cultural community and diversity education strategy has been developed, which includes a range of disability-focused initiatives such as:

* an information bank of capability requirements, including case studies and resources, for Victoria Police employees who provide services to people with disability
* updated notes for recruits, with key information about equitable police responses to people with disability.

Victoria Police partnered with Scope to undertake an 18-month pilot project aimed at attaining Scope's Communication Access accreditation at one of its police stations.

*"Imagine what it would be like if you were unable to speak or had difficulty getting your message across. Communication access aims to create a world where people who have communication difficulties are able to communicate successfully with everyone."*

Scope Australia

## CONTRIBUTING LIVES

"I contribute"

Making a contribution to your communities is a driving factor for a satisfying everyday life. People with disability must have equitable access to education, the economy and civic life to be a part of policy and decision making and to have representation and recognition.

We know that providing access to lifelong learning and education for people with disability is critical to enabling meaningful participation. People with disability participate in the economy as employees, employers, homeowners, renters, sellers, consumers and investors, albeit at a significantly lower rate than people without disability. The lower rates of participation result in lower income and fewer opportunities to prosper for people with disability.

Through our actions, we aim to increase the participation of people with disability in the economy, to increase the prosperity of all Victorians.

### INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

We are leading an inclusive education reform agenda. The agenda builds on the Special needs plan for Victorian government schools and will deliver the recommendations from the Review of the Program for Students with Disabilities.

In February 2017 a new Inclusive Education Professional Practice Branch was established in the Department of Education and Training Victoria. The branch is dedicated to building the workforce's capacity to deliver best practice inclusive education.

In 2017 we worked with experts and stakeholders on a strategy to improve outcomes for students with learning difficulties such as dyslexia, which has resulted in a training program for school-based staff on understanding and responding to the needs of students with learning difficulties.

In December 2017 we released a new inclusive education policy for students with disability and additional needs. The policy articulates a definition and vision of inclusive education for all Victorian government schools that is based on respect, diversity and adopting a personalised and strengths-based approach to supporting students with disability and additional needs.

Coburg High School continued to build on its work with the I CAN Network – an organisation that empowers people on the autism spectrum.

Selected as one of three Victorian government schools to trial the I CAN School pilot program in 2016, Coburg High started the program with six students participating in fortnightly sessions with a mentor.

In 2017, stage two of the program focused on developing leadership skills, emotional intelligence and training to become a mentor.

One participating student who experienced significant anxiety and was becoming increasingly disengaged from school was able to provide an entertaining presentation on his favourite topic, soccer, at the conclusion of stage 2 of the program.

*"I like how I get to meet and talk to other people who are also on the spectrum. I enjoy learning and practising overcoming some of the disadvantages of being on the spectrum. The people at I CAN are very nice and caring and understand us unlike other people.*

*I really enjoy the I CAN Network ... It's already helping me through tons of problems."*

Coburg High School student and I CAN participant The Department of Education and Training is committed to its funding involvement with the I CAN Network mentoring program at a number of mainstream government secondary schools.

### EMPLOYMENT

The Every opportunity: Economic participation plan 2018–2020 was launched in February 2018. Actions reflect the following key themes:

* improving educational pathways
* leading through the public sector
* community organisations and business community partnerships
* supporting people with disability to run their own business.

Funding of $2.655 million has been allocated through the 2016–17 and 2017–18 State Budgets to support the first tranche of activity in the plan.

Open for Business is a collaborative regional project delivered by rural and deaf access workers in the Wimmera and Grampians region from the Building Inclusive Communities Program. A key objective of this project is to improve access to and within businesses for people with disability, enabling increased participation in their communities.

The project engages the businesses sector to create awareness of the value of being accessible to the whole community.

Increased awareness will provide opportunities for positive change including better income for business, better inclusion for all and reduced barriers that may increase employment opportunities for people of all abilities.

Towong Shire Council produced a short video titled My Life, My Disability to raise awareness of and attract funding to the rural township of Corryong and other villages in the shire.

The 22-minute video was produced in partnership with Corryong Secondary College, Media King and Upper Murray Health and Community Services with funding from the Department of Health and Human Services' Building Inclusive Communities program.

It includes interviews by school students with individuals and families who share their personal experiences with disability in a remote community and their need for continuous support.

The project enabled Towong Shire, where 32.7 per cent of residents are living with disability, to have a voice.

It also provides a valuable resource for businesses and other parts of the community to raise awareness of the struggles and presence of disability in Corryong and across the shire.

**To view the video, search "My Life My Disability" on YouTube.**

*"Tyrell has had a lot of strangers approach him in the street and tell him how moving and inspiring it was to hear his story."*

Parent of video participant

*"You can bottle things up and finally let it out, thinking it will make a difference. But did it? Who really knows. That is your choice. All I know is that it made a difference to me and my family and that is all that truly matters."*

Bos family member

### VOICE AND LEADERSHIP

We are running two distinct initiatives to encourage people with disability to lead and contribute to public debate and to influence change within their communities and government. Scholarships will be offered in 2017–18 for the following programs:

* The mainstream Disability Leadership Program (with Leadership Victoria and the Disability Leadership Institute) has offered places to 51 people with disability in a range of open enrolment leadership programs. Program participants will also be designing and delivering a Leadership Forum in May 2018.
* The specialised Voice at the Table Project has been developed with the Self Advocacy Resource Unit.

In 2016–17 the Victorian Disability Advisory Council worked to increase its reach, capacity and profile by:

* formulating an 18-month work plan aligned to the Absolutely everyone outcomes framework and its own strategic priorities
* initiating a collaboration with the Victorian Government to explore using the standard disability identifier in mainstream services
* contributing to cross-government dialogue through the Interdepartmental Committee on Disability.

The Victorian State Budget 2016–17 allocated $465,000 to civic participation initiatives.

### CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

A key action area of the creative industries strategy, Creative State, released in 2016 was "Increasing Participation and Access". Initiatives taken within this action area include the following:

* Into the Limelight, a partnership project between Prahran Mission, the University of Melbourne and the Department of Health and Human Services, was launched in 2016–17. It demonstrates the benefits of participation in creative arts on the health and wellbeing of people with serious mental illness.
* From 1 January 2017, Arts Access Victoria, Back to Back Theatre and Rawcus Theatre Company received additional recurrent funding through Creative Victoria's Organisations Investment Program.

*"Bandmates will fulfil my dreams. I've always wanted to see the Darkness at least once because they are on my bucket list. Bandmates gets me out of my house and meeting new people, which would never otherwise happen."*

Bandmates participant

The Open Your Eyes disability awareness training offers specialist industry development to venue owners, managers, staff and security to create inclusive and enjoyable experiences.

Launched in August 2017 and delivered by Arts Access Victoria, this industry development training is creative and challenging. It lifts the lid on inclusion in a way that is contemporary, bold and practical.

The program equips participants with practical strategies, tools and resources, as well as confidence about the change they can make in their workplaces.

Bandmates Victoria matches volunteers and music lovers with disability and/or mental health issues, supporting them to experience Victoria's live music scene and make new social connections.

Bandmates Victoria provides an opportunity for people living with disability to attend live music venues with like-minded people.

This program is a partnership between Arts Access Victoria and the City of Maribyrnong and is supported by Music Victoria, VicHealth, the City of Darebin, the City of Melbourne, Moreland City Council, the City of Port Phillip and the City of Yarra.

### NDIS PARTICIPATION

We advocated for representation of people with disability to inform the ongoing NDIS governance, transition and future policy development.

We nominated qualified Victorians with disabilities as suitable candidates for positions on the NDIA board or the NDIS Independent Advisory Council.

In June 2017 the federal Minister for Social Services, the Hon. Christian Porter, announced the new Independent Advisory Council members, which included Dr Gerry Naughton, Leah van Poppel and Professor Rhonda Galbally from Victoria.

The NDIS Implementation Taskforce is a forum for people with disability and other key stakeholders to work closely with the Victorian Government on the NDIS implementation. It includes people with disability and their advocates, Victorian Government ministers, the NDIA and organisations representing the views of carers, unions and service providers.

The taskforce has six working groups to allow more detailed consideration of specific issues identified as priorities for successfully implementing the NDIS.

Key issues considered by the taskforce in 2017 include additional transition supports required for participants with complex needs, the Rights in Specialist Disability Accommodation legislative review and the NDIA's Independent Pricing Review.

The taskforce also considered the Productivity Commission's Review into NDIS Costs and the Commonwealth's quality and safeguarding legislation.

# VDAC AFTERWORD

On behalf of the diverse and dedicated members of the Victorian Disability Advisory Council (VDAC), I am honoured to present this afterword to the first annual report on Absolutely everyone: State disability plan 2017–2020.

This is the first state disability plan progress report to be tabled in the Victorian Parliament. We applaud this increased transparency and accountability for delivering on the vision for a more inclusive Victoria.

This report shows that there is much progress to celebrate. At long last we have a plan to increase the employment of people with disability in Victoria. It was wonderful to see that for the first time the Youth Parliament included a team of students who communicated using Auslan.

We have also seen increased awareness of disability across government and we have noticed a whole-of-government cultural shift towards better understanding and valuing of our diverse communities.

Investment in individuals to build their leadership capacity has led to more people with disability in influential positions, and innovative infrastructure like Changing Places has meant more people can spend time out of the house and in their communities.

VDAC's collaboration with the Victorian Government to look for opportunities to adopt a standard disability identifier should help the Victorian Government ensure that mainstream, everyday services are accessible and responsive to the one million Victorians with disability who will not be eligible for an NDIS plan.

Disability doesn't discriminate, but communities certainly can. We know 60 per cent of students with disability are bullied because of their disability. Delivering on the vision of Absolutely everyone is not only a whole-of-government effort, it is a whole-of-community effort.

Central to this vision is changing attitudes towards disability. We understand disability to be an evolving social construct that is shaped as much by attitudes and the built environment as it is by impairments. We must change the hearts and minds of people without disability.

The short-term investment to build the capacity of the disability advocacy sector is welcomed, but without long-term certainty we are concerned Victorians may not get the best value for money possible from our $2.5 billion annual investment in the NDIS.

While much progress has been made, people with disability continue to experience disparities in health, education, employment, housing and transport. For example, our public transport network still has a long way to go to be fully accessible, especially in rural and regional areas, and waiting lists for social housing are unacceptably long.

Absolutely everyone focuses on priorities and actions that all governments can agree on. It is important to build on the momentum achieved in its first year of implementation. We look forward to working closely with the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing and various departments to understand how future actions and priorities will be incorporated in the plan's second year of implementation.

After all, as Minister Foley reminds us, all Victorians are entitled to equality and people with disability deserve every opportunity.

Colleen Furlanetto  
Chair  
Victorian Disability Advisory Council

## KEY STAKEHOLDERS

## The council

The Victorian Disability Advisory Council comprises people with lived experience of disability. Members were appointed in late 2016 for three-year terms, and the council has an important role in overseeing the plan and reviewing progress.

Under the Disability Act 2006, the council is responsible for monitoring the implementation of strategies for promoting inclusion and participation in the community and removing barriers.

## The committee

The Victorian Government's Interdepartmental Committee on Disability considers emerging policy and strategic issues affecting people with disability that require a whole-of-government response.

All government departments are represented on the committee, which oversees the implementation of Absolutely everyone. This includes monitoring the progress of key priorities and actions.

## The Office for Disability

The Office for Disability sits within the Department of Health and Human Services and has an ongoing role in supporting both the committee and the VDAC, including coordinating the plan's implementation, monitoring and reporting.

## Disability action plans

Disability action plans are a longstanding mechanism for organisations to achieve positive change.

Organisations are encouraged to develop and implement a disability action plan aligned with the Absolutely everyone framework to:

* show how they are meeting community expectations
* comply with anti-discrimination legislation
* provide a consistent approach to help track progress across government and other sectors
* measure results that can feed into Absolutely everyone's framework and future actions.

Disability action plans are active documents that become core business and are integrated with other projects.

Work is underway to provide resources and guidance to organisations to support the reinvigoration of disability action planning and ensure that the plans are delivering real, positive results for people with disability.