FOREWORD

We are at a crossroad. It is a time of dramatic change for people with a disability, their families, carers and the disability system.

The Victorian Coalition Government has listened to people with a disability, their families and carers and heard about their experiences and daily challenges. People with a disability tell us that they just want the same opportunities as everyone else to live a good life. Families deeply love those they care for, but tell us that they need some meaningful time out. They want to know that their loved ones will be supported today, tomorrow, next year and into the future.

There is a desperate need for change to meet these reasonable expectations. The Victorian Coalition Government agrees with the Productivity Commission’s report on a National Disability Insurance Scheme, that the current disability support system throughout Australia offers little choice and no certainty that support will be provided when needed.

Our hope is that the future for people with a disability is quite different. That’s why the Victorian Coalition Government has committed Victoria to playing a lead role in establishing a fully implemented and financially sustainable National Disability Insurance Scheme, to provide lifetime support for eligible people with a significant disability based on their individual needs. To provide confidence that eligible people’s lifetime care and support needs will be met, it is critical that agreement is reached among all jurisdictions on the funding model for the scheme. Consistent with the Productivity Commission’s findings, the Victorian Government considers that the additional funding needed for a National Disability Insurance Scheme should be provided by the Commonwealth Government, given its unique capacity to raise the revenue that is required. Governance arrangements for the full scheme also need to be agreed as a matter of priority. This plan includes the Victorian government’s commitment to working with the Commonwealth and other States and Territories to achieve these outcomes, as well as to host the first stage of implementation of a National Disability insurance Scheme.

Victoria is already at the forefront of disability services reform, but we all know more has to be done, despite the challenges of our financial and economic context. Our journey over the last 15 years has taught us that we need to work at many different levels to bring about the changes we are striving for.

Victoria needs to build the capacity of people with a disability, their families and carers, our systems and communities. Importantly, we need to drive cultural change so that people with a disability are able to participate as full citizens in the community. We need to create a reformed system that enables a person centred approach, underpinned by mainstream community participation, which provides real and different choices for people and that continues to innovate.

The challenge is for everyone to create a society in which people with a disability are welcomed and have opportunities to prosper. This is not a marginal issue. One in five Victorians has a disability. Too many Victorians with a disability miss out on opportunities to participate in education, work, and leisure. Our economy and society lose out when we do not use their talents to the full.
Victoria is already well along the path to a different and better future for people with a disability and their families. Our focus now needs to be on providing the right supports, at the right time, and then getting out of the way to let people live the lives they choose.

The Draft Victorian state disability plan 2013–2016 sets out how the Victorian Coalition Government will work with the disability sector and the broader community to break down barriers faced by people with a disability.

The Victorian Coalition Government wants to significantly improve Victoria’s support for people with a disability. We want to make sure that the system of support is sustainable and ready for a National Disability Insurance Scheme. That process starts with you. Your voice is valued and we want to hear what you have to say. We look forward to your comments to assist us to finalise the Victorian state disability plan 2013–2016.

The Hon Mary Wooldridge MP
Minister for Community Services

Andrea Coote MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Families and Community Services
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BACKGROUND

We have come a long way in Victoria over the past 15 years in building a more responsive and individualised approach to providing support to people with a disability, but we know there is much more work to be done.

The number of people with a disability is increasing and the barriers they face on a daily basis are far reaching. Our future response needs to remove physical and attitudinal barriers in society, streamline and connect the mainstream and disability systems, and prepare for a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

People with a disability have made it clear that they want the same rights and opportunities as everyone else – to be active participants in the community, to make their own decisions and to live a full and meaningful life. However, people with a disability remain more likely to live in poverty, to have fewer educational qualifications, to be out of work and to experience discrimination and abuse.

The purpose of the Draft Victorian state disability plan 2013–2016 (the draft plan) is to:

> create more opportunities and better lives for people with a disability
> position Victoria to make a successful transition to a viable National Disability Insurance Scheme and reformed system of disability support
> deliver on our commitments under the National Disability Strategy.

The Victorian Government agrees with the Productivity Commission’s 2011 Disability care and support report that there is a clear case for reform of the existing specialist system towards one that is financially sustainable and provides lifelong support for eligible people with a significant disability.

The government is committed to driving the reform process towards establishing a viable, fully funded and implemented National Disability Insurance Scheme, in response to people with a disability calling for respect, to be acknowledged as the experts in their own lives and to have greater choice and control. The changes we need to make to prepare for a National Disability Insurance Scheme are the changes that we need to make anyway, to help us lay the foundation for a better future for people with a disability.

For the first time in Australia’s history, all Australian governments have committed to a national approach to improving the lives of people with a disability. The National Disability Strategy is a step forward in reducing and preventing barriers across the whole of society to enable people with a disability to participate as equal citizens. The draft plan is the vehicle for implementing the National Disability Strategy in Victoria.

The draft plan takes a multilayered approach to addressing the disadvantages that people with a disability, their families and carers experience as part of their everyday lives. It works to reduce barriers in the mainstream and to provide people with a disability with the support they need to fully participate in all aspects of life, including at home, at work and in the community.
We need to enable not only choice and control over specialist support, but also more effective integration of different services so that people with a disability can move seamlessly between them, whichever area of government provides them.

The quality of life of people with a disability also depends on their social environment. The government will work hard to influence the attitudes and behaviour of society as a whole, but it is everyone’s responsibility to consider what part they play in making a society that accepts and embraces people with a disability, their families and carers as an integral part of our community.

In an environment of increasing demand and budget constraints, we need to use our existing resources to work smarter by focusing on innovation and being more efficient. The Victorian Government will take the lead by providing the framework and working across the whole of government, but all sectors – employers and businesses, not-for-profit organisations and community groups – have a crucial role to play.

Promoting and enabling the active participation and contribution of people with a disability has significant financial and other benefits for the whole of society. Every Victorian has a responsibility to contribute to a welcoming community that will support people with a disability, their families and carers to have better lives. The draft plan is a call to action for all Victorians to work together.
FRAMEWORK FOR THE DRAFT VICTORIAN STATE DISABILITY PLAN 2013–2016

At the heart of the draft Plan is people with a disability, their families and carers. People with a disability make up nearly one-fifth of the Victorian population, including people with different types and levels of impairment, children, young people, older people, women, men, Aboriginal people, people living in rural or regional areas, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Figure 1: Population of people with a disability in Victoria

The framework comprises:

- the vision of the Victorian Government for people with a disability, their families and carers
- four outcomes that will help achieve the vision
- four policy directions that guide the government’s actions
- six principles that underpin the draft Plan.

Each of the four policy directions is supported by a number of priority areas of focus and under those, are some examples of where the government’s efforts need to be concentrated.

**Principles**
Six principles underpin the changes needed to make a real difference in the lives of people with a disability:
- fairness
- certainty
- sustainability
- simplicity
- choice
- self determination.

**Vision**
The vision for Victoria for the next four years:
- an inclusive Victorian society that enables people with a disability, their families and carers to fulfil their potential as equal citizens.

**Policy directions**
Four policy directions define specific areas of focus that will drive our activities:
- a strong foundation for learning, jobs and health
- protecting rights and promoting participation
- access to neighbourhoods, spaces, buildings and transport
- a contemporary approach through system reform and continued work towards a viable National Disability Insurance Scheme.

**Outcomes**
We are striving to achieve these outcomes to improve opportunities for people with a disability to take part in everyday life:
- access to and outcomes in education, jobs and health that enable people with a disability to lead full and rewarding lives
- a community that promotes and protects the rights of people with a disability and actively supports their participation and engagement
- planning and design of the physical environment and transport system that enables people with a disability to live, work and move around
- disability supports that provide choice, control and opportunity, and that complement the mainstream and facilitate the social and economic participation of people with a disability, families and carers.
POLICY DIRECTIONS

1. A strong foundation for learning, jobs and health

2. Protecting rights and promoting participation

3. Access to neighbourhoods, spaces, buildings and transport

4. A contemporary approach through system reform and continued work towards a viable National Disability Insurance Scheme
WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?

1.1 Strengthen the capacity of universal education and learning services to respond to the needs and aspirations of people with a disability.

> Strengthen early childhood interventions so that they are more effective, better targeted and more able to respond to the diverse and changing needs of people with a disability, families and carers.

> Implement the Abilities Based Learning and Education Support resource across the Victorian school system.

> Continue to build a positive culture of disability inclusion in school communities.

> Strengthen the support system for the transition from school into post-school education, training or employment for people with a disability.

1.2 Strengthen the Victorian Government’s approach to building sustainable employment pathways for people with a disability.

> Build the capacity of the vocational education and training sector to deliver improved outcomes for learners with a disability.

> Strengthen pathways to employment for young people with a disability through an increased emphasis on building work readiness.

> Improve recruitment, employment and retention outcomes of people with a disability in the Victorian Public Service and public sector.

> Promote and support non-government organisations and the private sector to increase employment opportunities for people with a disability.
1.3 Adopt a comprehensive approach to improving the health of people with a disability in Victoria.

> Work with primary and specialist health services to respond to the needs of people with a disability in Victoria and provide comprehensive, accessible and flexible services.

> Work with services to improve access to coordinated health, community care and disability services, to provide people with a disability with a seamless and integrated service response.

> Support appropriate health and community care responses for people living in supported accommodation, including more integrated care for people with complex physical, cognitive and psychiatric needs.

> Encourage interdisciplinary therapeutic models that use a family-centred approach and are more responsive to the needs of children and adolescents with a disability and their families.

> Improve outcomes for people with a disability who are the victims of family violence, sexual assault or abuse in care by working with the justice and specialist system and relevant supports.

> Work with services to develop the capacity of disability services staff to better support the health needs of people with a disability.

> Improve prevention, early identification and treatment of mental health and substance abuse issues for people with a disability through a coordinated response between the sectors.

> Improve access to rehabilitation services to avoid younger people with disabilities moving into residential aged care services.
WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?

2.1 Strengthen and promote access to rights and justice.
  > Maintain and strengthen protections and supports for people with a disability who experience or are at risk of experiencing violence, sexual assault, abuse and neglect.
  > Improve the accessibility of Consumer Affairs Victoria information and services.
  > Improve the accessibility of voting, electoral processes and related information.
  > Build community awareness of the rights of people with a disability.

2.2 Develop a targeted approach to enhance community understanding and positive attitudes towards people with a disability.
  > Work with the media, government, community, private sector and tertiary education institutions to change how disability is portrayed.
  > Build community and employer awareness about the benefits of recruiting and retaining people with a disability.
  > Promote the contributions of people with a disability to the Victorian community.

2.3 Work together with people with a disability, their families and carers to enhance participation in communities.
  > Increase the voice and representation of people with a disability to speak for themselves.
  > Increase the capacity of families and carers of children with a disability to speak for themselves and their children’s needs, and to understand their rights and opportunities.
  > Continue to promote access to and build on use of online communities for people with a disability.
  > Build readiness of people with a disability, their families and carers to transition to a reformed system of support.
2.4 Optimise the capacity of mainstream services and industries to deliver choice, improved experiences and participation outcomes for people with a disability.

> Improve accountability of public sector organisations to meet their legislative obligations to develop and implement Disability Action Plans.

> Build the capacity of the sport and recreation, tourism and arts industries to include people with a disability.

> Promote participation of people with a disability on public and private sector boards and committees.

> Promote access and participation across the small business sector in local communities.


> Promote digital equity, in both public and private technology use, for people with a disability.

> Strengthen the provision of inclusive programs in early childhood education and care services.
WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?

3.1 An integrated approach to land use and transport planning.

> Build the capacity of the planning functions around urban design, integrated land use and transport planning to achieve accessible places and neighbourhoods.

> Work towards co-located disability support services and community facilities close to transport hubs.

> Take a cooperative and integrated approach to the development of major transport, planning, housing and built environment strategies, for instance the development of a metropolitan planning strategy and regional land use plans.

> Work to minimise barriers that interrupt door-to-door movement between transport destinations and places and neighbourhoods.

> Work to consolidate accessible community places and facilities close to transport hubs.

> Share examples of accessible design across state and local government processes.

> Improve the operation of disability parking including participation in the Australian Disability Parking Scheme.
3.2 Develop a coordinated, accessible transport system.
> Improve access to the public transport network for all Victorians including those people with a disability, older Victorians and people with restricted mobility.
> Improve public transport availability for people in the community to engage in social, community and employment opportunities particularly in outer areas of Melbourne and regional Victoria.
> Promote a transport system that has effective interconnections between different modes of transport and enables timely door to door travel between different places.
> Use principles of universal design when expanding or upgrading the public transport network.

3.3 Promote universal design as an approach to the development of public housing and buildings in Victoria.
> Promote liveable housing in the design of public and community housing in new and existing stock.
> Publicise examples of public buildings that incorporate universal design to promote good practice and innovation.

3.4 Increase the range of accessible, affordable and secure housing.
> Promote a range of affordable supported accommodation options that respond to the diversity of needs and preferences of people with a disability.
> Work with the building industry and local councils to promote liveable housing design options to communities.
WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?

4.1 Continue to reform the system of disability support in Victoria to enable transition to a viable National Disability Insurance Scheme.

> In partnership with the Commonwealth and States and Territories lead and drive key elements of foundation reform in preparation for a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

> Ensure that the Commonwealth works with Victoria and other States, as a key first step, to reach agreement on funding and governance arrangements for the full implementation of the scheme.

> Negotiate with the Commonwealth to develop and host the first stage of implementation of a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

> Support disability service providers to transition to a reformed system of support.

> Focus on building a trained workforce that is capable of delivering a reformed system of support.

> With key partners, establish a consolidated human services gateway that delivers streamlined, flexible and integrated access and support for people with a disability alongside other community members.

> Focus on opportunities to build mainstream support for people with a disability.

> Target intensive or specialist supports to those people who have the greatest need, including those experiencing multiple disadvantage.
4.2 Maximise participation of people with a disability through increased choice and control over their supports, and how these supports are delivered.

> Complete the transition from a system that funds services to a system that funds individuals.

> Strengthen planning, resource allocation and administrative approaches to self-directed supports.

> Administer self-directed support packages so that they are delivered in a flexible, accountable and streamlined way.

> Build the skills and capacity of people with a disability, families and carers to independently plan, organise and manage their disability supports.

> Develop a market-based approach to give people with a disability a choice of providers (and in this context examine the role of government as a service provider).

> Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of early childhood intervention services.

4.3 Ensure that the specialist system responds to the diversity of needs amongst people with a disability.

> Provide people with a disability in the specialist system who are vulnerable to abuse or the victims of crime with access to all the rights and protections afforded by equal opportunity and justice systems.

> Improve the experience of being in the criminal justice system, including the Youth Justice System and associated supports, for both alleged and convicted offenders who have a disability.

> Build the capacity of the supports and services to be provided so that they are non discriminatory and culturally appropriate in meeting the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse groups and Aboriginal people.

> Develop supports for people who have an autism spectrum disorder, recognising the importance of life stages and transition points.

> Address the disadvantage that can be experienced by women with a disability.

4.4 Better recognise and support the role of families and carers.

> Develop a strategic approach to recognise and value the role that families and carers have in providing support to people with a disability.

> Provide opportunities for respite and other forms of support that help maintain the caring role.

> Deliver services and supports that are responsive to the changing needs and priorities of families and children.
HAVING YOUR SAY

WRITTEN SUBMISSION PROCESS
Your comments will be accepted until 5pm EST Wednesday 11 July 2012.

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Fax: (03) 9650 3812
Email: statedisabilityplan@dhs.vic.gov.au
Phone: 1300 880 043 or TTY 9639 2417

INFORMATION AND HELP
Go to www.dhs.vic.gov.au/statedisabilityplan for more information on the draft plan:
> Alternative formats and languages
> Consultation forums in 2012

If you need help to give us your feedback please call the Office for Disability and we will work through the questions with you. Phone 1300 880 043 or TTY 9639 2417.

If you need an interpreter to help you make the call, please phone the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National on 131 450.

ANONYMITY/CONFIDENTIALITY/PRIVACY
You do not need to provide your name or any other personal information at any stage. All feedback will be treated with strict confidentiality. If you attend a forum or other event, your personal information will be collected for administrative purposes and destroyed immediately following the event.

The content of all feedback may be used in future government reports relating to disability, but will be used in a way that will make it impossible to determine the identity of individuals.
FEEDBACK FORM: TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Q1. Are you:
- [ ] Male
- [ ] Female

Q2. Which group do you identify yourself as belonging to?
   Please tick only one box.
   - [ ] I am a person with a disability
   - [ ] I am a family member or friend of a person with a disability that I do not provide care for
   - [ ] I provide unpaid care to a family member or friend with a disability
   - [ ] I am employed in the disability sector
   - [ ] Other or none of the above

Q3. Do you identify as belonging to one of these groups? Please tick only one.
- [ ] Aboriginal
- [ ] Culturally and linguistically diverse
- [ ] Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex
- [ ] Refugee
- [ ] Other or none of the above

Q4. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Draft Victorian state disability plan?
- [ ] Very satisfied
- [ ] Satisfied
- [ ] Unsatisfied
- [ ] Very unsatisfied

Can you tell us why?
Q5. Is there anything that is missing from the draft plan?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

If Yes, can you tell us up to three things that are missing?

1. 
2. 
3. 

Q6. What are the three most important things that the government should do to improve the lives of people with a disability?

1st most important

2nd most important

3rd most important

Q7. Do you have any other comments on the draft plan?

______________________________________________________________

Thank you for taking the time to give us your feedback.
Accessibility

If you would like to receive this publication in another format or language please visit the Victorian state disability plan website at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/statedisabilityplan or email us at statedisabilityplan@dhs.vic.gov.au