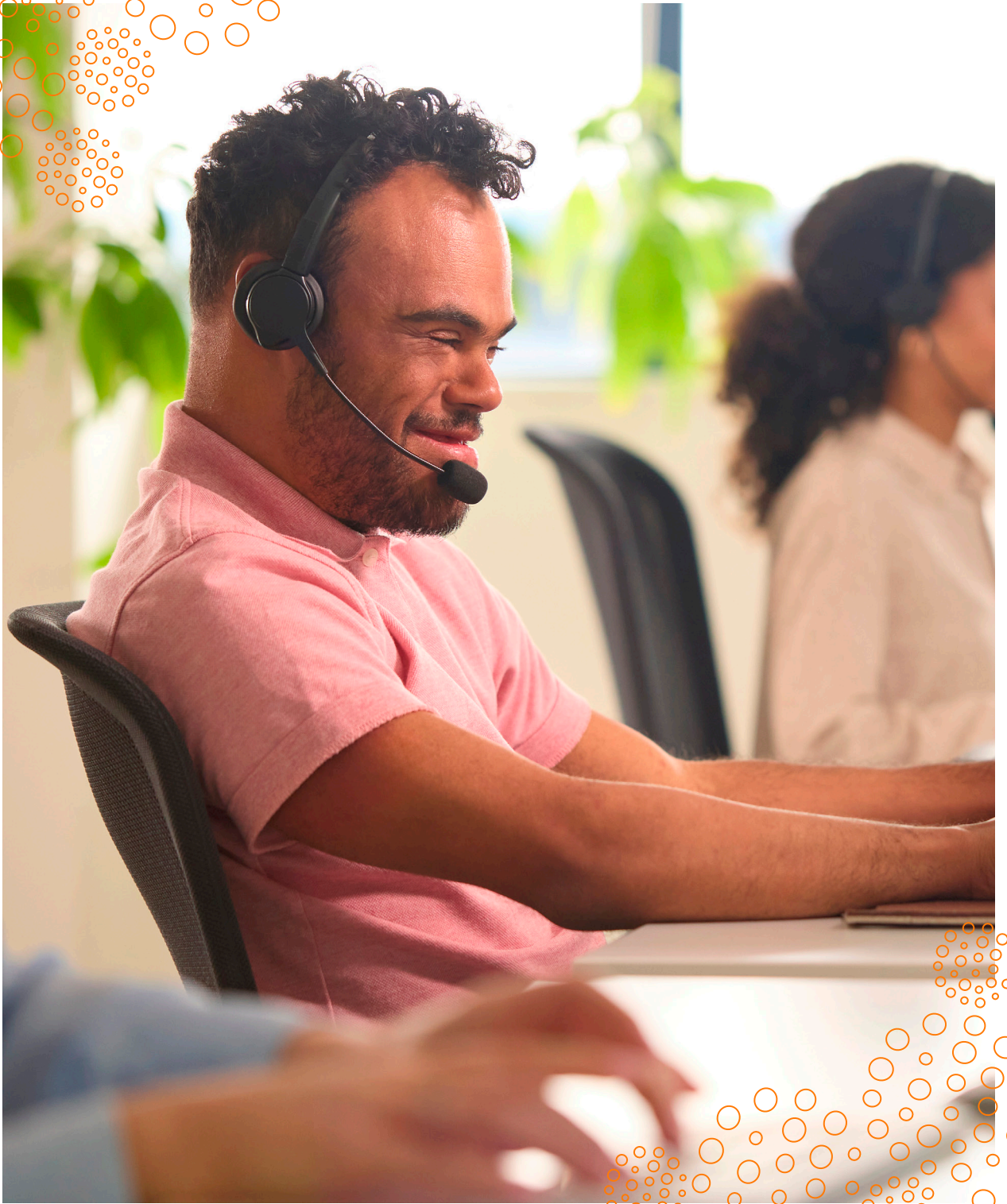


Central and Eastern Sydney PHN
Disability Inclusion
Action Plan
2024-2027





Acknowledgement of Country

Central and Eastern Sydney PHN acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians and Sovereign People of the land across which we work. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

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Our Vision

The Central and Eastern Sydney PHN Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2027 vision is that every employee has access to an inclusive, supportive, and diverse environment.

We are committed to fostering a culture of respect, empowerment, and accessibility that values the unique contributions of all team members.

CESPHN aims to set the standard as an inclusive employer that actively promotes the recruitment, development, and retention of individuals with disabilities. We aim to be an organisation where employees with disabilities are welcomed and celebrated for their unique contributions, skills, and perspectives.

We pledge to invest in an accessible workplace, technologies, and training programs that enable every employee to perform at their best. Our commitment extends to providing ongoing support, accommodations and flexible work arrangements that empower our team members with disability to excel in their roles.

Through the CESPHN Disability Inclusion Action Plan, we envision a workplace of diversity, where all employees feel a strong sense of belonging and purpose. Our aim is that our workforce mirrors the rich tapestry of our community, demonstrating that disability inclusion is not only the right thing to do but also the key to our collective success and growth. We will undertake these activities being mindful of the operational and business needs of our organisation.

Through this vision statement, CESPHN emphasises its commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive workplace where employees with disability are valued, respected, and empowered to succeed. Our vision reflects the organisation's commitment to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion among its staff and leadership across the community to create a better future for everyone.



Foreword

The Central and Eastern Sydney PHN Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2027 vision is that every employee, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, works to their full potential in an inclusive, supportive, and diverse environment.

The Plan is a framework for action on improving disability inclusion within our organisation and to carry that into all our practice and partnerships throughout Central and Eastern Sydney.

Under this plan the Central and Eastern Sydney PHN commits to being an organisation of inclusion that actively identifies and addresses barriers to employment and supports full participation of all its staff. We will work to:

Promote and practice disability inclusion

We aim to cultivate an inclusive culture that embraces individuals with disabilities, with every staff member actively promoting disability inclusion by prioritising activities that strengthen staff awareness and capability.

Ensure our business systems support disability inclusion

Our aspiration is to have business systems that support and allow full participation by our staff with a disability thereby enabling their active engagement in the office life of CESP HN; and have

Working environments that are disability inclusive

We will work to ensure our office is accessible to our staff with a disability through the uptake of features included into the office design, and reasonable adjustments and assistive technology that will be provided for staff on an as-needs basis.

We acknowledge that for too long people with a disability in the workforce have not enjoyed the same access and opportunities as others. Over 10% of our community has a disability and many of our services aim to support those with a disability achieve greater access to health and social services.

As an organisation aspiring to be a leader in disability inclusion and working to improve health outcomes, we must make full use of the skill sets and unique qualities of all members of our community which includes those with a disability.

This Plan sets out our priorities to integrate disability inclusion across the work of the organisation, including focus areas and strategies for strengthening our internal capabilities, our internal systems and policies, and our employment practices. We seek to achieve these priorities while ensuring CESP HN's commitment to running an efficient and effective organisation aiming to achieve better health and wellbeing for all.

I commend this plan to you and look forward to working with you to support its implementation.



Nathalie Hansen
CEO, Central and Eastern
Sydney PHN

About CESPHN

The CESPHN region includes Central and Eastern Sydney and the remote Lord Howe Island. Our boundaries align with those of the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) and Sydney Local Health District (SLHD).

CESPHN is the second largest of the 31 Primary Health Networks (PHNs) across Australia by population, with a resident population of 1.55 million in 2021. This includes 16,225 Aboriginal people.

CESPHN contributes to the health of local populations through:

- Improving health services, including supporting capability
- System integration, including strengthening connections between primary care and other parts of the health system, and
- Commissioning services to address critical gaps in local delivery.

Background

The CESPHN Disability Inclusion Action Plan is essential to meet our social obligations, promote diversity and inclusion and this plan will also enhance our reputation, engage employees and the community, and will provide greater focus and accountability in our ongoing improvement as we work towards achieving greater disability inclusion.

Enhanced awareness of staff and the greater employment of people with a disability will help CESPHN achieve other core goals of addressing health disparities experienced by those with a disability and facilitate improvements in quality of care.



Definition of Disability

CESPHN's work is informed by the social model of disability, which defines disability as the result of the interaction between people living with impairments and an environment filled with physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers. Our definition seeks to be inclusive of different disabilities and recognises that society can place limits on a person with a disability.

Strategic Objectives

1. We promote and practice disability inclusion.
2. Our systems support disability inclusion.
3. Our working environments are disability inclusive.



Strategic Objective One:

We promote and practice disability inclusion

We aim to cultivate an inclusive culture that embraces individuals with disabilities, with every staff member actively promoting disability inclusion.

To achieve this, CESPHN will prioritise activities that strengthen staff awareness and capability, further develop our practice as an inclusive employer, and ensure access to leadership opportunities for people with disability within our staff and governance structures. We are building on strong foundations.

CESPHN has a strong, positive, and inclusive culture and many staff with significant expertise in disability inclusion. We have an established track record of inclusive employment and have people with disability in leadership roles in our organisation. Our focus in 2024-2027 will be to expand this and to embed disability inclusion in all aspects of the organisation's culture.

1.1 Resourcing our staff

We will ensure that all staff working for CESPHN have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to integrate disability inclusion into their work.

Key actions:

- Provide foundational disability awareness training for all staff.
- Provide all staff with training on "Disability in the Workplace".
- Provide access to specialist training in disability inclusion for all relevant staff when required.
- Make International Day of People with Disability a focal point for sharing the lived experience of people with disability.

1.2 Resourcing our managers

We will ensure that managers have the knowledge and skills required to embed disability inclusion in their leadership practice.

Key actions:

- Provide training for managers on disability in the workplace and managing staff with disability.
- Create practice guides for managers on discussing disability and reasonable adjustments.
- Increase staff and managers' awareness of the supports that are already available.

1.3 Peer support and collective voice of staff with disability

We will strengthen collective voice and peer support among staff with disability in CESPHN.

Key actions:

- Establish mechanisms to provide guidance and feedback to CESPHN (including to the DIAP Implementation Committee) on disability inclusion and provide peer support for staff with disability.
- Seek guidance from staff with a disability and DIAP Implementation Committee on the impact of any significant changes in policy and procedures with CESPHN.
- In consultation with staff with disability, explore options for strengthening data collection on the experience of staff with disability.
- Seek guidance from staff with a disability and DIAP Implementation Committee on the impact of any significant changes in policy and procedures with CESPHN.
- In consultation with staff with disability, explore options for strengthening data collection on the experience of staff with disability.

1.4 Ensuring people with disability have opportunities to lead

We will ensure that people with disability are visible and active in key roles within the organisation.

Key actions:

- Support training opportunities for staff with disability/with lived experience as carers.
- Consider lived experience of disability/ as a carer as an additional criterion when recruiting members to governance groups, including the Board and Board committees.
- Encourage people with disability to be part of the CESP HN Voices for Health.

1.5 Disability inclusion champions

We will create specific roles and activities for actively fostering an inclusive workplace.

Key actions:

- Support a network of champions within CESP HN that will include the executive.
- Each Disability Inclusion Champion will be supported to promote disability inclusion on an ongoing basis.



Strategic Objective Two:

Our systems support disability inclusion

Our aspiration is to have systems that support and allow full participation regardless of disability. CESPHN is committed to building on existing features of our systems that respond effectively to the diverse needs of our staff with disability thereby enabling their active engagement in the office life of CESPHN.

2.1 Recruitment and onboarding processes

We will further integrate disability inclusion into our recruitment and onboarding processes.

Key actions:

- Ensure CESPHN job advertisements promote CESPHN as a disability inclusive employer that values the contribution of staff with disability.
- Build relationships with disability recruitment firms to increase the reach of CESPHN recruitment materials among people with disability.
- Support development of additional guidance on when and how to include questions about disability and reasonable accommodations during the recruitment process.
- Include information on disability inclusion, including the range of reasonable adjustments supported by CESPHN, within orientation materials.
- Increase the visibility of materials regarding disability inclusion throughout the office.

2.2 Reasonable adjustments

We will further strengthen our approach to Reasonable Adjustments, through making the options more visible to staff and increasing manager knowledge of Reasonable Adjustments and manager capability to implement them.

Key actions:

- Develop a Reasonable Adjustments Policy that provides guidance to staff and managers.
- Develop a Reasonable Adjustments Passport for individual staff members for approved adjustments and this will reduce the need to reassess adjustments every time an employee changes jobs or gets a new manager.
- Create a disability contact officer portfolio within the People and Culture team.

2.3 Job design

We will ensure that roles within CESPHN where possible are actively designed to be inclusive of people with disability.

Key actions:

- Review roles to maximise inclusion for people with disability and remove unintended barriers.

2.4 Policies and procedures

We will ensure that all relevant CESPHN policies actively support disability inclusion in their design, structure, provisions, and communication.

Key actions:

- Review any relevant policies to ensure that disability inclusion is appropriately embedded.
- Integrate disability inclusion into CESPHN's existing quality infrastructure.
- Develop a policy on Engaging with People with Disability to support appropriate consultation, collaboration, and co-design with people with disability and carers on program, policy, and service development.

Strategic Objective Three:

Our working environments are disability inclusive

The physical and technological environment of an organisation can either enable inclusion or create barriers to participation.

Under this objective CESP HN commits to ensuring that the places where people work are accessible through the uptake of features hard wired into the office design, and reasonable adjustments and assistive technology that will be provided for staff on an as-needs basis.

To achieve our objectives, we will focus on immediate opportunities to improve the office environment, including through creating suitable spaces. Over the medium term we will continue to monitor the needs of staff members and modify the office and other working environments as required.

3.1 Ensure an accessible physical environment.

We will ensure that there are no physical barriers for people with disability at CESP HN work sites.

Key actions:

- Audit the CESP HN office to identify any aspects requiring immediate attention.
- Create low sensory space/s.
- Create individual emergency evacuation plans for staff with disability as required.
- Modify processes to ensure that people with disability have consistent access to parking on-site as required.

3.2 Technology supports inclusion.

We will use technology to ease barriers and support full participation for people with disability.

Key actions:

- Include technology (software and equipment) in the reasonable adjustments available to staff with disability.
- We will audit all office software and take appropriate steps to ensure all staff can access and use software to the same capacity.

3.3 Accessible communication

We will ensure that communication within and from CESP HN is accessible for people with disability and includes screen reader capabilities.

Key actions:

- Incorporate accessible communication (including plain English and pictorial representations) in the CESP HN website.
- Provide training to communications staff to ensure our communications are accessible.

Implementation

The Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2027 provides the strategic framework for CESPHN's activities to improve disability inclusion within the organisation. An operational plan will be developed to assign lead responsibility to ensure accountability and achievement of key actions.

Governance and oversight of the implementation of the Plan will occur via the CESPHN DIAP Implementation Committee and will include people with lived experience of disability. The Committee will provide annual updates to the CESPHN Board, Community Council, Clinical Council, and CESPHN staff on progress towards the priorities identified in this Plan.

The CESPHN DIAP Implementation Committee will also continue to monitor emerging issues to identify where additional strategic priorities may need to be added to the Plan. This plan will be updated annually.



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