**Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre**

**Disability Action Plan**

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**1. Introduction**

Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre welcomes and encourages people of all abilities to participate in leisure, recreational and social activities in our local community.

We look forward to the opportunity to provide greater access and a more complete service to those people with a disability and their families.

Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre recognises and aligns itself with the Council’s Disability Action Plan, in order to ensure optimal partnership with Council to ensure all people with a disability are not disadvantaged or discriminated against. We recognise Council’s identified actions and desired outcomes for its plan, and Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre aims to be a valuable provider of leisure services to all members of the community of Whittlesea.

**2. Survey**

In developing the Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre Disability Action Plan, the YMCA placed a high emphasis on engaging the community through a Needs Analysis Survey. The survey was distributed to all current centre users, Council’s Access Networks, the YMCA Access Networks, Disability organisations within the City of Whittlesea, and current partnering organisations such as Plenty Valley Community Health. Due to an initial low response rate, we extend the survey period and distributed the survey a second time. We had a total of 10 completed and returned surveys. We acknowledge that this is a low response rate; therefore we are also utilising knowledge and experience of the large staff team.

We have used these results to indicate where Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre can best focus its efforts to meet the leisure needs of people with a disability.

We are thrilled that the survey results confirmed the following feedback:

* 80% of our users will recommend Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre to a friend or family member.
* 80% of survey respondents felt Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre was an inclusive and accessible facility.

Feedback from the survey which highlighted areas of improvement have been included in the Disability Action Plan where possible.

# Disability Action Plan

**ACCESSIBLE MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION**

***Information about our programs, services, costs, documentation, procedures and client rights will be provided in applicable ways.***

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| Aims | Actions | Timeline | **Responsibility** | **Status** |
| To ensure that all service users have access to information that is understandable to them and their family. | Continue to develop accessible information on services, programs and activities for people with a disability.Update TRAC Website to provide additional Accessibility tab for promotion of programs and services. Continue to comply with the WCAG guidelines for the TRAC Website. Provide specific targeted marketing for disability programs and services. | OngoingNovember 2017As required | Marketing / Program CoordinatorsMarketing TeamMarketing Team / Program Coordinators |  |
| Encourage feedback so people’s views and experiences are heard and reported. | Provide a variety of ways for all users to provide feedback in the best way to suit their communication styles.Seek feedback from key disability community groups and users, for example at the Whittlesea Disability Network.All customer feedback to be included in council’s monthly report.  | OngoingMonthlyMonthly | All StaffCentre ManagerCentre Manager |  |

# PHYSICAL ACCESS

# *Our facility will be accessible to all people of our community.*

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| Aims | Actions | Timeline | **Responsibility** | **Status** |
| Ensure our facility is in the best working order and as accessible as possible | Monitor IPAD and customer feedbackReport facility maintenance issues to council within 48 business dayWork with council to increase the priority level of maintenance which impacts accessibility to priority 1Conduct facility inspections including access to the facility and equipmentCommunicate an relevant maintenance issues to patrons and provide alternative where possibleProvide summary of maintenance issues and feedback via regular report to Council | OngoingOngoingSeptember 2017DailyAs requiredWeekly | All StaffOperations CoordinatorCentre ManagerDuty ManagersOperations CoordinatorOperations Coordinator |  |
| To improve our facility where applicable in order to enhance accessibility. | Raise opportunities to improve accessibility at Quarterly Access meetings and incorporate strategies where applicable.Recommend to Council any capital works required to improve accessibility. | QuarterlyAnnually | Centre ManagerCentre Manager / CoW Contracts Supervisor |  |

# PROGRAMMING OPPORTUNITIES

# *Our programs and services will be accessible to people of all abilities. We will be responsive to the needs of people with a disability.*

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| Aims | Actions | Timeline | **Responsibility** | **Status** |
| To ensure our current programs and services are accommodating to people with a disability. | Adjust programs and services where applicable to ensure inclusiveness of different ability levels.Provide support through program staff or volunteer support to enhance opportunities for people with a disability to access desired programs and services.Ensure staff understand and promote the Companion Card system to users. | OngoingOngoingOngoing | Program CoordinatorsAll StaffCentre Director/Frontline Team Leader |  |
| To support the new federals governments NDIS program. | Ensure that key staff at the centre have a good understanding of the NDIS processOffer support to NDIS clients to ensure the process of accessing the centre is simplified | OngoingOngoing | Program CoordinatorsProgram Coordinators |  |

# COMMUNITY FOCUS

# *We recognize that we are part of a complete community approach to enhancing the lives of people with a disability in the City of Whittlesea*

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| Aims | Actions | Timeline | **Responsibility** | **Status** |
| To improve customer to customer relationship and increase customer awareness of people with a disability | TRAC to host a Disability Open Day to celebrate International Day of People with DisabilityThrough the new signage audit and installation, include a statement about inclusion. Also, include this statement in member information packs  | December 2017TBA | Centre DirectorCouncil |  |
| To link into existing programs and services in the local community | Create and / or enhance relationships with external organisations to both promote centre programs and services, and to learn about external opportunities.YMCA Staff will attend the Whittlesea Disability Network meetings.Ensure the facility is available to external disability groups wherever practical as a matter of priority. | OngoingMonthlyOngoing | All StaffCentre Manager / Disability Services DirectorProgram Coordinators |  |

# STAFF

# *Our staff will be accepting and understanding of all customers, seeking to provide optimal service with each customer contact.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Aims | Actions | Timeline | **Responsibility** | **Status** |
| To ensure applicable staff participate in Disability awareness training. | Information of current facility access features and disability-focused programs and services included in the induction of all staff.One-hour Disability Awareness training completed by all new staff within six months of commencing employment.Three-hour Disability training to be completed by applicable staff on an annual basis. | OngoingOngoingOngoing | Coordinators / DirectorsHR Staff / Aquatics DirectorHR Staff / Aquatics Director |  |
| To ensure clear communication with each customer contact. | Communication aids available at the Customer Service Desk in an accessible location. | November 2017 | Frontline Director |  |

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

# *Our programs and services will be backed up with applicable and complete policies and procedures in order to provide optimal service to people with a disability.*

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| Aims | Actions | Timeline | **Responsibility** | **Status** |
| To produce a Disability Action Plan in partnership with the City of Whittlesea which is specific to the local community | To complete the DAPTo lodge the DAP with the Australian Human Rights Commission. | April 2017May 2017 | Centre ManagerCentre Manager |  |
| To take a proactive role in the employment and volunteer / placement opportunities of people with a disability. | Indicate in all YMCA employment advertisements that the YMCA is an Equal Opportunity Employer.Promote opportunities for promotion of work experience for people with a disability. | OngoingOngoing | Program CoordinatorsProgram Coordinators / Disability Services Director |  |

**4. Communication of the Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre Disability**

 **Action Plan**

We understand that the success of this Disability Action Plan is grounded in the communication of both its importance and its action points.

The plan will be communicated in the following ways:

1. Directly to Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre staff, first to Directors and Coordinators, and then filtered through to all staff throughout the facility via staff meetings.
2. To the relevant Disability Networks and Staff at Council, and then distributed to appropriate networks.
3. Through hard copies available at the Customer Service Desk, in staff offices, and common staff areas and communication channels.
4. Through the Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre website and Whittlesea YMCA website.
5. The status of the progression of action points within the Disability Action Plan will be communicated to Council through the Quarterly Access Meetings.