



Disability Action Plan 2013 - 2017 12 page summary



Our Vision

A fully inclusive community where people with a disability live the life they choose.

Our Mission

Enriching peoples' lives through support, advocacy, partnership and choice.

Karingal Disability Action Plan 2013 - 2017

Karingal believes disability is just one of the many aspects of life that any person may encounter. Disability does not define a person and it is something that can happen to anyone, at any age. By offering support, advocacy, partnership and choice Karingal strives to enrich a person's life experience and the Karingal Disability Action Plan (KDAP) 2013–2017 is a document that outlines the path we will take to help ensure we achieve these goals.

This KDAP outlines our commitment to creating a fully inclusive and accessible community for all people. The plan presents clear strategies for supporting the needs and aspirations of people with a disability who work with us and use our programs and services.

It is an important step in maintaining and strengthening relations with participants, their families and support networks, employees with a disability, and key stakeholders in the community services sector. The plan aligns with and reflects the Karingal Strategic Plan 2012-2017.

By detailing key strategies and tangible outcomes to measure success, this document will play an important role in all our decisions, from daily operations to strategic planning.

We are excited about the role this plan will play in strengthening our commitment to an inclusive culture for all people.

Rod Payne Chair, Karingal Board of Directors **Daryl Starkey** Chief Executive Officer

Objective: Karingal will become a leader in providing employment opportunities, volunteering opportunities and professional development for people with a disability. Barriers to employment and leadership opportunities will be removed. The use of adaptive technologies will be enhanced and necessary adjustments made to the workplace. Karingal will target a defined number of traineeships for people with a disability providing opportunities for entry into the human and community services sector.

Goal	What we aim to do	How we will measure performance
Goal One: To provide equal opportunities for people with a disability to obtain employment and professional development within our organisation. Focus points: - Employment - Retention - Professional Development Who will help implement these actions: - People and Culture - Risk and Compliance	Encourage people with a disability to consider Karingal as an employer of choice and work towards becoming a leader in employing people with a disability.	All advertised positions include Karingal's diversity statement. This activity is monitored and the number of people with a disclosed disability who apply for positions is recorded
	Ensure recruitment processes are inclusive and accessible for all people with a disability.	All positions available are advertised through disability friendly media and the content is available in accessible formats.
	Ensure policies and procedures are in place to enable people with a disability to join Karingal's workforce with the knowledge that their physical, intellectual, psychological or sensory impairment will not impede their opportunities to contribute, share, learn, lead or counsel.	Annual reviews of Karingal's People and Culture policies and procedures ensure Karingal doesn't indirectly discriminate against people with a disability and complies with the Australian Disability Discrimination Act 1992. All position descriptions will clearly state the inherent requirements of the job. The number of people with a disclosed disability employed by Karingal increases by five per cent each year.
	Develop an Affirmative Action Employment Plan; a 'go-to' resource that outlines Karingal's practices for recruiting people with a disability.	The Affirmative Action Employment Plan for people with a disability is developed and incorporated into Karingal's People and Culture Plan. This document is referred to when selecting, interviewing and appointing new employees with a disability.
	Provide adaptive technologies as required to employees with a disability to ensure they can perform their roles and contribute to and participate in the workplace to the best of their abilities.	Employee satisfaction surveys will be used to capture the number of employees using adaptive technologies and accessible formats and how effective they are in supporting people to perform their roles.
	Create opportunities for people with a disability to complete work experience at Karingal.	Each year at least two people with a disability will undertake relevant work experience at Karingal that is customised to their professional aspirations and their physical, psychological, intellectual and/or sensory abilities and skills.
	Develop a Reasonable Adjustment Policy to facilitate adjustments that accommodate the physical, psychological, intellectual and sensory needs of employees to help increase their capacity to perform their role and improve workplace safety.	A Karingal Reasonable Adjustment Policy is developed and available to all employees to help facilitate a person's capacity to perform in their role. Data on the number and type of reasonable adjustment requests made, and how they are responded to, will be recorded, gathered and analysed.
	Ensure all employees are aware of and understand the Reasonable Adjustment Policy, particularly the role of adaptive technologies and workplace adjustments.	All staff members understand that reasonable adjustments can be made to accommodate their physical and/or psychological needs to promote confidence, independence and the physical and psychological wellbeing.
	Modify the biannual Karingal staff survey to capture demographic information related to disability or impairment experienced by staff. Data collected will be correlated with staff satisfaction levels.	Employees with a disability have the confidence to voluntarily disclose their impairments and take comfort in knowing that Karingal will listen and make improvements to accommodate their needs.
	Gather data on reasonable adjustment requests so that continuous improvements can be made to the ways in which the unique and individual needs of employees with a disability are accommodated.	A procedure for reasonable adjustment requests will be developed, implemented and monitored. Data on the number and type of requests made and how they are responded to will be recorded and analysed.



Aimee Hovey has been passionate about cooking for as long as she can remember. Now, thanks to her hard work and dedication, she is heading into the final year of her chef's apprenticeship with Karingal Kommercial and is taking her love of cooking to a whole new level.

Aimee was working as a supported employee with Karingal Kommercial helping prepare food for hungry workers at Shell when she was offered the chef's apprenticeship just over two years ago.

"I'd wanted to work in hospitality for a long time, but found it hard to get more than dishwashing work," Aimee said.

"I just love working with food, I've always really liked cooking – it's a really fun thing to do. I cook lots of curries, pastas, things like that. An apprenticeship was exactly what I wanted to do, so it's pretty cool to be doing it with Karingal.

Aimee takes her love of cooking to the next level

"It's definitely made me happy to be able to go to work and have a job – it's awesome that it's something I like doing."

These days Aimee splits her time between classes at The Gordon TAFE and getting hands on experience under qualified chefs in the industrial kitchen at Karingal's new Australian Disability Enterprise operations in North Geelong.

By May 2015 Aimee will be a fully qualified chef and is looking forward to seeing where her new qualification will take her.

"I am working towards becoming a chef in a restaurant and I definitely want to use my skills to travel more and maybe even work overseas.

"The best parts about working at Karingal are the opportunities I have been given and the people I have worked with along the way. There is pressure in the kitchen and it's fast-paced, but I don't find it stressful at all – we just do what we do and it's been great."

Objective: Karingal will increase the opportunities for people with a disability to be involved in decision making and planning processes within the organisation. Karingal will ensure that a range of disability groups are represented in decision making processes such as advisory groups and strategic planning, as it is recognised that the experience of disability is different for all people. Karingal will also provide support where required or requested for people with a disability to participate in decision making and planning processes.

Goal	What we aim to do	How we will measure success
Goal 2: To provide opportunities for people with a disability to participate in decision making and planning processes that inform the current and future operations at all levels of our organisation. Focus points: Engage people with a disability in - decision making roles - leadership roles and	Karingal's Disability Advisory Group (DAG) becomes a strong and vibrant voice involved in decision making, planning and the development of policies that impact the lives of Karingal's current and future participants, their families and/or support networks.	The DAG continues to exist and provides feedback on issues such as accessibility, service and program delivery and new policies and procedures that impact the lives of people with a disability, their families and/or support networks. The group includes participants who access services from various Karingal branches, parents and/or family members of service users and Karingal employees.
	Develop a greater connection between Karingal's Board of Directors and life experiences of people with a disability through the inclusion of people with a disability and/or people with lived experience of disability or disadvantage and/or advocates/ representatives/decision makers for people with an intellectual disability.	Karingal will actively recruit people with a disability and/or people with lived experience of disability or disadvantage and/or advocates/representatives/ decision makers for people with an intellectual disability, who have the required skills and qualifications for membership on Karingal's Board of Directors and committees.
 opportunities Who will help implement these actions: Karingal Board of Directors People and Culture Public Relations and Communications Marketing Service Development 	Ensure committees relating to service delivery include people with appropriate skills and be representative of the diversity of the Karingal community. This will ensure decisions and planning by committees more accurately reflects the needs and wants of the community.	Committees will be monitored to ensure that there is a wide cross-section of members who represent the relevant interests and have a balanced representation of age, gender, geographic location and disability.
	Enhance the awareness Karingal employees and participants have of their own and each other's rights and responsibilities.	A Charter of Rights and Responsibilities is developed and provided to all new participants, their families and/or support networks and employees as part of the intake process.
	Improve the level of confidence in and understanding of inclusive consultation, communication strategies and technology available for working with people with a disability.	All members of Karingal's Board of Directors and senior staff receive 'Inclusive consultation and communication with people with disabilities' training.
	Ensure all people who are appointed to boards and committees take up their positions with increased levels of confidence, communication, leadership, decision making and advocacy skills.	A range of training options for developing skills in committee participation will be available for all people appointed to committees (e.g. online learning, toolkit, coaching).
	Seek to sponsor people with a disability to participate in leadership programs and opportunities, both internal and external to the organisation. As a result, the leadership skills of people with a disability who are employed by Karingal develop, grow and prosper.	Each year one person with a disability will be offered a full sponsorship to participate in a leadership program. This opportunity will be actively promoted across Karingal and successful sponsorships will be profiled in the Annual Report.



Jacqui McKim has been a valued Karingal employee since joining the organisation in March 2013. In January 2014 she was appointed to the role of Disability Action Plan Project Officer with the organisation's Risk and Compliance division. In this role she coordinates and works closely with the Karingal Disability Advisory Group who have been 'strong and mighty campaigners' for the development and implementation of the Karingal Disability Action Plan 2013-2017.

Jacqui's work ethic, experience, knowledge and communication skills make her the perfect fit for this role, and since joining Karingal she has made an invaluable contribution towards bringing the Karingal Disability Action Plan together and ensuring its first steps are put into action.

Jacqui also has Cerebral palsy; something she doesn't describe as a disability, rather just one of the many life experiences that make-up her as a person.

Jacqui putting plans into action

"I live life with the added experience of Cerebral palsy; it doesn't define me or take away from the person I am," says Jacqui. "We all bring different experiences with us, whether they're as mums, dads, sisters, artists or political activists and at this point in my life, I don't see disability as being any different. Even though my body cannot escape Cerebral palsy, my life is more than having a disability."

Although she faces additional challenges along the way, Jacqui says her best work happens in workplaces and environments where she is accepted and seen as 'Jacqui' not 'Jacqui with Cerebral palsy'. It is then that she can simply focus on work without the pressure of having to prove herself.

"It takes me physically longer to complete tasks, but the high level of organisation in Karingal's Risk and Compliance division and the fact we know about most deadlines well in advance helps me handle this.

"Sometimes my requirements are just a matter of me being aware of my work environments and knowing when to speak up about what adaptions I need. Often it's little things that can make a big difference; I wear Second Skin lycra splints which help with my movement, posture and balance among other things, and can impact my body temperature. So, having an air conditioned office in summer and heated office in winter is important."

"Disability Action Plans are a bit like an education; they familiarise and educate organisations on how to make their workplaces, products and services accessible and inclusive for everyone. Hopefully it's the kind of education that is enduring."

Objective: Karingal will have a diverse workforce that is representative of the whole community including people with a disability. Karingal will promote disability awareness training for all internal stakeholders including the Karingal Board, management and staff. Karingal will continue to practice inclusion at all levels of the organisation.

Goal	What we aim to do	How we will measure success
Goal 3: To create a workplace culture that maximises opportunities for people with a disability to fully and equally participate, is inclusive and respectful of diversity, equal employment opportunities and human rights.	Develop a core value of a diverse work place that the Karingal community works, communicates, grows and leads by.	A core value is defined by the Karingal Disability Advisory Group in consultation with the wider Karingal community and approved by the Karingal Board of Directors. This value is promoted through Karingal's website, social media campaigns and the distribution of material such as posters and flyers.
	Encourage the Karingal community to develop a sound understanding and knowledge of the Karingal Disability Action Plan.	Publications, staff orientation booklets and participant handbooks contain up-to-date versions of the Karingal Disability Action Plan and any subsequent information.
Focus points: - Cultural change - Disability awareness	Ensure all new Karingal employees understand the importance the organisation places on including people with a disability as part of the Karingal community.	All new Karingal employees will receive information on the goals and strategies of the Karingal Disability Action Plan, and where to locate it, during their induction training.
Who will help implement these actions: - Karingal Board of Directors - People and Culture - Public Relations and Communications - Marketing	Continually work to increase our awareness and understanding of the challenges people with a disability, their families and support networks encounter by offering training and remaining up- to-date with the most current human rights policies, frameworks and initiatives.	A disability awareness training plan will be developed that requires all Karingal employees and volunteers to complete at least one disability awareness training module such as human rights principles, person centred approaches, communication styles and access and inclusion.
	Ensure new Karingal staff and Board members develop a heightened appreciation of the challenges and experiences people with a disability encounter in their everyday lives.	As part of the induction process, new Karingal staff and Board members are offered '180 degree challenge' training with a coach who has a disability, allowing participants to experience what it is like to have a disability.
	Days and events that recognise the achievements and challenges that people with a disability, and their families may face are publicly recognised by Karingal and promoted to the wider community.	Each year at least five recognised, disability specific community events and awareness days will be included on the Karingal intranet and website calendars.
	Become a valuable contributor and supporter of awards that encourage and recognise excellence in disability inclusion in the communities where our services and programs have a presence.	Karingal's involvement in regional community awards for excellence in disability inclusion increases by at least 50 per cent. This may include financial, marketing and promotion support or the provision of staff.
	Develop a comprehensive and dynamic electronic resource library containing disability awareness information resources and tools that are accessible via the internal and external websites.	A resource library for disability awareness material is developed and maintained with at least five new resources uploaded annually. The library is readily available for staff, participants, families, carers, sector professionals and the community.

Objective: By providing information in a range of formats, Karingal will ensure that all people have direct access to information that is accessible, supports informed choices and increases opportunities for participation, education and skill development.

Goal	What we aim to do	How we will measure success
Goal 4: To communicate information that meets the communication needs of all members of the community, particularly people with a disability.	Provide online information in a range of accessible formats that are inclusive for all users.	Online information is readily available in various accessible formats and can be efficiently converted into alternative formats if requested, such as read- to-speak (audio), large print and plain English. Other formats, such as Braille or Easy English, will be investigated on request.
Focus points: - Technology - Communication standards Who will help implement these actions: - Participants, their families and support networks - Staff - The community	Ensure Karingal's website and intranet are accessible and inclusive platforms for people with a disability.	Website, intranet and online documents, comply with the W3C 2A (AA) standard at all times. Compliance is measured through a bi-annual web accessibility audit conducted by Vision Australia.
	Produce or convert Karingal information into accessible formats using a clear and consistent course of action across all areas of the organisation.	Policies for producing and/or converting information into accessible formats are developed including a Request for Accessible Information form that clearly defines the steps for handling these requests and is documented and tracked.
	Produce Karingal documents in accessible formats upon request.	Documents are produced and/or delivered in an accessible format systematically and efficiently within 20 business days of the request being lodged.
	Encourage opportunities for communication exchange between staff at Karingal reception sites and people with communication impairments.	Symbol and alphabet communication boards are visible and readily available for use at each Karingal reception site. These boards are accompanied by guidelines for their effective use.
	Offer key Karingal service documents in accessible formats.	Key service documents are available in a range of accessible formats and are readily available for participants, families and support networks, Karingal staff and community members who require them. Participant satisfaction surveys include questions on the accessibility of materials, language and information.
	Competently use Easy English formats across Karingal's service and program delivery areas and corporate services.	Through disability awareness training modules, staff members receive training on using Easy English for communicating with participants. An Easy English Writing Style Guide is available on Karingal's intranet and a bi-annual staff survey is conducted to monitor use of accessible and Easy English formats.
	Continue to move towards creating an environment and service that is universally accessible.	Key stakeholders, including the Disability Advisory Group, complete a review of Karingal's service items including business cards, promotional material and stationery. Improvements to improve accessibility are identified, including colour, design, font size, and the addition of Braille.

Objective: Karingal will ensure that all programs delivered are accessible to people with a disability. Karingal, in partnership with people with a disability will consider the current and future needs of people with a disability and identify and develop appropriate support strategies. Karingal will ensure that all programs cater for the diverse needs of people with a disability.

Goal	What we aim to do	How we will measure success
Goal 5: To ensure that all programs and services are accessible, responsive and inclusive and meet the needs and aspirations of	Work with each participant, in collaboration with their funding body, to plan their support services based on their individual goals, needs and choices using person centred and active support approaches to encourage independence.	Each Karingal participant will have a 'living' goal focused plan, relevant to their communication style, life choices and funded support. Each support plan is reviewed annually and signed by the individual or their representative.
each individual. Focus points: - Service delivery Who will help implement	Work in a professional manner with individuals and their family and/or support networks and foster partnerships to ensure that support services are provided as required and in an accessible and inclusive manner at all times.	Annual participant surveys indicate a satisfaction rate of at least 80 per cent for quality of service delivery and compliance with National Disability Service Standards is measured.
these actions: - Service Development - People and Culture	Support participants, their families and/or support networks through person centred and active support models where their needs, aspirations and lifestyle choices are respected and encouraged.	Relevant staff members receive Person Centred and Active Support refresher courses every two years, together with ongoing coaching and mentoring in Active Support. All induction training courses for newly recruited staff include people with a disability as trainers/facilitators.
	Build a strong knowledge base of the assistive technology, aids and equipment available to support and enable people with a disability. Encourage access to these technologies across all environments, with the goal of becoming a leader in this area across Australia.	The number, type and frequency of assistive technology used will be monitored and reviewed annually. Research and trials of assistive technology will be actively promoted to encourage greater independence for people with a disability and i Pad programs implemented.
	Encourage feedback from participants and consumers about service quality, continuous improvement and best practice. The results will be fed back into business planning and staff reviews and incorporated into service delivery.	Offer feedback opportunities/mechanisms across all sites and on social media platforms. Resolve complaints efficiently and analyse data annually. Undertake annual participant satisfaction surveys and publish the results in Karingal's newsletter.
	Evaluate our services in partnership with people with disabilities, enabling them to contribute to the ongoing development and diversification of Karingal's service and program delivery.	Annual business planning across Karingal incorporates feedback and input from participants, family members and/or support networks and documentation of how each branch evaluates services in partnership with people with a disability.
	Increase employee awareness of the principles of dignity, self-determination, diversity, equality and non-discrimination and how to implement these principles to support Karingal's culture and practice.	Provide support staff with equal employment opportunity training biannually and at induction on the principles of dignity training, self-determination, diversity, equality and non-discrimination.



In May 2014 Karingal opened a new purpose built facility in Douro Street, North Geelong that will serve as the primary hub for Karingal's Australian Disability Enterprise operations.

By 2016 it is estimated up to 80 supported employees will work from this facility, undertaking meaningful employment across the three major business streams of environmental solutions, business solutions and food services.

The new fit-for-purpose building has been built to AS1428.1 accessibility standards and incorporates many features that will enable Karingal Kommercial to continue to grow and develop new business streams such as a commercial laundry, cafe and commercial kitchen and food packaging area.

Karingal Manager Lisa Couper worked closely with architects during the development of the project and said accessibility was at the forefront of all decisions regarding design and functionality.

"Full accessibility was one of the most important aspects of the planning process for our new Douro Street facility," said Lisa. "The core purpose of this new building is to facilitate valued employment for people with a disability so the design needed to provide full access for all our staff and supported employees – including those who use wheelchairs."

"There are many features of this building that make it fully accessible for everyone including a wheelchair accessible lift from the ground floor to the mezzanine level and concrete paths that replaced gravel, allowing for better access between buildings. Ramps have also been incorporated for easy access around the site and all walkways have a level gradient. Floor mats are recessed to lay flush with the slab, all door handles are at an accessible height and the building incorporates a fantastic

Accessibility at the forefront of new facility

accessible kitchenette area designed to be used by everyone.

"Accessibility is an imperative for Karingal and this is evident from our staff right up to board members who ensured that a full disability accessibility audit was conducted on the design.

"Everyone will benefit from this new facility at Karingal, both staff and supported employees. In particular, by being fully accessible, our supported employees will be able to rotate around different work stations which will present them with new opportunities to enhance and develop their skills and knowledge.

"The commitment to building this facility demonstrates the value of the work that our supported employees do at Karingal. It is real evidence that Karingal respects their rights and requirements as equal employees and is prepared to invest in their future."



Objective: Karingal will ensure that the outcomes for people with a disability will not be limited by buildings and sites that have access constraints. Karingal understands the barriers imposed by a non-accessible environment and the negative impact that has on the quality of a person's life.

Goal	What we aim to do	How we will measure success
Goal 6: To ensure all of our workplaces and service sites are safe and universally accessible for all members of the community.	Ensure each Karingal reception site is accessible for people with physical, psychological, intellectual and sensory disabilities.	Visual maps, tactile indicators, signage and information on accessible parking, entrances and exits and toilets are available at all Karingal reception sites.
	Provide accessible parking bays at all Karingal sites that people with a disability can easily locate.	Accessible parking bays on Karingal operated sites are clearly identified, both at their physical location and on site maps.
Focus points: - Existing buildings - New buildings - Documentation practice	Develop a Building Access Plan that will facilitate the review and implementation of access standards at all Karingal buildings.	Access at all Karingal owned and rented buildings will meet the Disability Access to Premises Standards 2010.
Who will help implement these actions: - Facilities and major projects - Risk and Compliance	Address and rectify any access issues in Karingal owned or leased buildings and properties where feasible. Where the access issue cannot be rectified, such as in a heritage listed building, the access issue will be clearly identified and appropriate measures or actions are taken to prevent any negative impact.	Karingal's Building Access Plan is annually reviewed and issues regarding access are identified and rectified in a timely manner and to a level that meets the Disability Access to Premises Standards 2010.
	Ensure all new buildings, built or purchased by Karingal, are accessible for all potential property users.	Karingal's Strategic Facilities Management Plan and Karingal Facilities Master Plan will be restructured and revised to ensure that all new buildings (built or purchased) comply with universal access codes.
	Train selected Karingal staff members to readily recognise and rectify access issues to help maximise the accessibility of Karingal properties.	Selected Karingal staff members complete Certificate IV in Access Consulting to become qualified access auditors/consultants and will have the capacity to perform accessibility audits on our buildings and premises.
	Undertake regular accessibility audits in accordance with the Karingal Audit Plan to ensure Karingal owned and leased premises are effectively managed and kept in compliance with the Disability Access to Premises Standards 2010.	The Karingal Audit Plan includes audits of the organisation's access policies and associated procedures. Access policies and procedures are up-to-date.
	Incorporate the most up-to-date universal access requirements into Karingal policies and procedures, particularly those related to building upgrades.	Any future building and grounds work will implement the universal access requirements from Karingal's policies and procedures in accordance with legislative requirements as a minimum standard.

Objective: Karingal has a significant role in raising community awareness of disability and inclusion through events, promotions and publications. By ensuring all events meet universal access guidelines and that people with a disability are actively included, Karingal will provide an opportunity for all members of the community to come together and share a meaningful experience. Karingal events and publications will also aid in raising community awareness of the value and richness of diversity.

Goal	What we aim to do	How we will measure success
Goal 7: To create events, promotions and publications that are universally accessible and promote people with a disability in the best possible way. Focus points: - Event management - Promotion - Publications Who will help implement these actions: - Public Relations and Communications - Risk and Compliance	Ensure Karingal's values and principles - including the upholding of dignity, ensuring equity and celebrating diversity – are reflected in all events, promotions and publications.	The outcomes and feedback from all Karingal events, promotions or publications will correlate with its pre-determined purpose and goals.
	Enrich and improve the accessibility of Karingal events through the inclusion of people who have a disability on all event planning committees	Each event planning committee includes at least two people with a disability as members who can provide an important contribution on issues such as physical access, communication, type of venue and transport.
	Maximise the accessibility of Karingal events and increase our ability to foresee and overcome potential accessibility issues prior to events.	An event management checklist and procedure document is completed for Karingal events to ensure accessibility is maximised. The accessibility of all events is evaluated through satisfaction surveys.
	Measure the accessibility of all Karingal promotional material to ensure all Karingal promotional material meets accessibility criteria prior to its publication.	An accessibility checklist is developed and implemented to ensure all Karingal promotional material meets accessibility standards prior to its publication.
	Ensure all Karingal promotional material consistently displays positive images, empathy and sensitivity on disability and mental health issues.	Develop a preferred language guide checklist to ensure all promotional material displays positive images, empathy and sensitivity on disability and mental health issues.
	Collaborate with local media outlets to help ensure reports on disability or people with a disability reflect increased levels of empathy, sensitivity and positivity.	An agreement on reporting guidelines is developed and implemented with local media outlets.
	Improve the accessibility of all Karingal publications by incorporating an Accessible Information Guide into the Karingal Style Guide.	All Karingal publications meet the requirements of the Accessible Information Guide.



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