

2013–2016  
**STRATEGIC  
PLAN**



Since 1964, Autism SA has been supporting families and individuals living with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Our founding members were families driven by the desire to ensure they had access to the best information, education, treatment and support. They advocated for acceptance, understanding and encouraged research and leadership in the community. “...when the welfare of any group of children is in doubt, a parent body is the best means of making sure that their interests are not neglected” (Autistic Children’s Association of South Australia Annual Report, 1964).

We have remained true to our beginnings. We strive to deliver the best possible services and outcomes. We strive to be a strong voice, both for and with, the autism spectrum community. These are key strategic priorities for our organisation.

# ASD IN AUSTRALIA TODAY

People with a disability across Australia are currently experiencing the most dramatic and most promising change that Australia has seen in the delivery of services and supports. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) commenced operations at a number of launch sites under the banner of DisabilityCare Australia on 1 July 2013. There is strong financial commitment and support from all levels of Government and all parties. Full roll out the scheme in 2019-20 will see funding for people with disabilities double. It will see a system governed at a national level that will aim to ensure that people with a disability have greater control in choosing and managing their services and supports.

For the autism spectrum community, this is an exciting development and gives us opportunity to address some of the following key issues:

- The prevalence of ASD is growing at a faster rate than any other disability and we need to ensure that current and future generations have access to services they need and that the unique difficulties facing people with ASD are understood and supported

- Compared to people with other disabilities, people with ASD experience poorer outcomes in relation to workforce participation (Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers, 2009)
- People with ASD experience poorer outcomes in relation to education (Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers, 2009)
- Barriers to participation for people with ASD are generally “invisible” making the disability less obvious to professionals and the community
- ASD is associated with high prevalence of multiple disabilities (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2009)
- Unlike other disabilities, there exists a complex array of potential interventions for ASD with variable evidence base.

We need to work together to shape a better future and better outcomes. Our strategic plan provides a framework for this to occur.

# WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

**Our 2016 vision** is for a society that enables people living with Autism Spectrum Disorder to get the most out of life.

**Our mission** is to improve life outcomes for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder by providing and facilitating the very best information, connections, expertise, education, services, support and a strong representative voice.

Our Strategic Plan 2013-2016 delivers seven key messages for the future:

- The consumer is at the centre of everything we do – Autism SA will ensure that we provide individualised and person-centred services and supports. We understand that people with ASD and their families need to be supported, involved and engaged to ensure that they can get the most out of life. We will ensure improved ways for people to be involved in decision making and representation across our organisation.
- Service provider of choice – Autism SA will deliver the best possible services and outcomes. There will be a clear shift in how Government funding will be provided in the future. Families and individuals with ASD have often been frustrated by the lack of services or the type of services. So have we. This reflects traditional funding models where the type and range of services provided are predominantly determined by a contract with Government. Our focus for the future is to align our services with what people with ASD want and need – this is a reflection of future funding models where individuals will have choice and control over services and supports provided.
- A secure and certain future – Autism SA will provide strong, dependable and innovative governance. We need a secure and certain future for our organisation and for the autism spectrum community. We will ensure good governance in a changing environment that effectively positions Autism SA and the autism spectrum community for the future.
- Developing more of what people want – Autism SA will diversify and ensure the long-term sustainability of our service offerings. The future holds opportunity to investigate the delivery of a range of services and supports that have not been previously available or have been very limited. We see great opportunities to partner with other organisations and to design future services in collaboration with the autism spectrum community.
- A strong voice for, and with, the autism spectrum community – Autism SA will be the sector authority for influencing and leading social policy. We will be active in informing the design and development of the NDIS. We will also be active in advising other systems – education, mental health, housing – about the specific and unique needs of people with ASD. We will continue to have an active role in research, community education and professional development.
- Great staff and great systems - Autism SA will create a workplace where our people will perform at their best. We are concerned that there will not be enough skilled and qualified staff in the future to deliver the services and supports required. We will be progressing a comprehensive strategy that ensures that we are able to recruit, develop and retain the best possible staff to deliver the best possible services.
- Campaigning, communicating, connecting – Autism SA will engage and communicate effectively with our stakeholders. We need to be more active in the future about ensuring that the autism spectrum community and its supporters are well aware of developments and opportunities.

# HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

Our Strategic Plan 2013-2016 identifies a number of priorities under each of the seven key areas. These will be reviewed annually by the Board to inform business planning for the organisation that is responsive to the changing environment and the needs of the autism spectrum community.

We have also adopted a number of principles to guide and drive our future directions:

- Respect – ensure dignity and valuing of individual talents, strengths and diversity
- Embracing Opportunity – actively seek new and creative opportunities to benefit the autism spectrum community
- World Class – strive to deliver services and supports that are recognised as best practice
- Expertise – constantly develop and improve our specialised knowledge and understanding
- Professionalism – provide ethical, skilled and high performing staff and services

- Quality – achieve excellence in everything we do through continuous quality improvement
- Collaboration – deliver great outcomes together with the autism spectrum community, service providers, supporters and staff
- Innovation – design and implement new ways of operating and delivering services and supports.

The guiding principles are supported by the values adopted by Autism SA to enhance the culture that we want to develop in our staff and our teams.

## HOW WILL WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

The Strategic Plan 2013-2016 identifies a number of broad indicators of success. The Board will also be responsible for setting targets on an annual basis.

# AUTISM SA STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2013–2016

<b>Vision</b>	A society that enables people living with ASD to get the most out of life					
<b>Mission</b>	To improve life outcomes for people with ASD by providing and facilitating the very best information, connections, expertise, education, services, support and a strong representative voice.					
<b>Strategic Priorities</b>	Transform toward individualised and person-centred services	Deliver the very best services and outcomes	Provide strong, dependable and innovative governance	Diversify and ensure the long-term sustainability of our service offerings	Be the sector authority for influencing and leading social policy	
<b>Key Messages</b>	The consumer is at the centre of everything we do		Developing more of what people want		Great staff and systems	
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support self-directed decision-making about life-span services</li> <li>Safeguard Consumers' rights within the community</li> <li>Ensure effective consumer representation across the organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve and maintain alignment between the wants/needs of the consumers and the availability and choice of quality products and services</li> <li>Achieve outstanding information services that assists individuals and carers navigate the service system</li> <li>Facilitate access to quality services and supports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure effective financial planning and a growing financial base</li> <li>Strengthen profile and support from the corporate and private sectors</li> <li>Uphold diligence to ethical behaviour, quality and service relevance</li> <li>Enhance systems that minimise risk and guarantee compliance and accountability</li> <li>Continuously develop a board that is fit for purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish new quality services and markets that are consumer driven</li> <li>Expand integrated services and partnerships</li> <li>Diligent change and risk management</li> <li>Anticipate future needs through consumer feedback</li> <li>Lead innovation in service design and delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure an active role in the design and implementation of the NDIS and individualised funding</li> <li>Capture new partnerships and alliances aligned to purpose and future directions</li> <li>Participate in credible research, community education, professional development and information dissemination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress a workforce plan that aligns to organisational and community values</li> <li>Advance effective systems that support our people in their work</li> <li>Develop a staff culture that "lives" the vision, ethics and values of Autism SA</li> <li>Be an "employer of choice"</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that stakeholders are engaged and involved</li> <li>Promote and communicate our purpose and objectives</li> <li>Engage in effective systemic advocacy</li> <li>Disseminate and promote NDIS information</li> <li>Diversify income from non-government sources</li> </ul>					
<b>Guiding Principles</b>	Respect, Embracing Opportunity, World Class, Expertise, Professionalism, Quality, Collaboration, Innovation					
<b>Values</b>	Together (we strive), Curiosity (in our thinking), Truth (in decision making) Courage (to take action), Respect (for each other), Adventure (in how we do things), Celebrate (contributions to making the workplace better)					
<b>Signposts of success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The outcomes delivered by services</li> <li>The proportion of people living with ASD that can access quality, timely, and self-directed service and support solutions</li> <li>The quality of life of people living with ASD</li> <li>The level of community awareness of the needs and issues of people living with ASD</li> <li>The level of acceptance and number of real opportunities for inclusion provided by society</li> <li>The number of strong partnerships made with mainstream agencies and the corporate and private sectors</li> <li>The strength of our balance sheet, the sustainability of our organisation and the demonstration of diversified revenue</li> <li>Safe, skilled and engaged staff and volunteers</li> </ul>					

